

DH



DECCAN HERALD

The Power of Good

Dream run ends in heartbreak for Ayush

Indian loses in final of Asia Badminton Championships

Page 14



AI is a culture and change transformation, not just a technology shift: Executive V-P, Infosys

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DECCAN HERALD



DECCAN HERALD

The Power of Good

Royal Challengers revel in a run-fest

Patidar, Salt, Kohli slam fifties in 18-run defeat of Mumbai Indians

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Kharge seeks all-party meet on women's reservation bill

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How India's aviation giants lost their captains

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World

200 dead as Nigerian airstrike hits market

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Nation

Amarnath yatra to begin on July 3

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Trump threatens to block Hormuz after talks fail

NO HEADWAY: US prez warns of 50% tariffs on China if it helps Iran

WASHINGTON/DUBAI, AGENCIES

President Donald Trump on Sunday ordered a US naval blockade of the Strait of Hormuz in the wake of failed peace talks with Iran — a significant escalation that would test an already fragile ceasefire.

In lengthy social media posts and an interview on *Fox News*, Trump acknowledged that the marathon negotiations in Islamabad had gone “well” and “most points were agreed to”.

But he said Tehran had been “unyielding” in its refusal to give up its nuclear ambitions, and had failed to open the strait — a condition of the two-week ceasefire currently in place.

“Effective immediately, the United States Navy, the Finest in the World, will begin the process of BLOCKADING any and all Ships trying to enter, or leave, the Strait of Hormuz,” Trump said on his Truth Social platform.

“Any Iranian who fires at us, or at peaceful vessels, will be BLOWN TO HELL!”

Trump also said that the US would take action against every vessel in international waters that had paid a toll to Iran, and begin destroying mines that the said the Iranians had dropped in the strait.

And he threatened China with a massive 50% tariff on its goods entering the US if it decides to help Tehran militarily.

Iran's Revolutionary Guards responded with a statement warning that military vessels approaching the strait will be considered a ceasefire breach, adding the strait is “open for the safe passage of non-military vessels in accor-

SIMMERING CONFLICT

Entire American negotiating team leaves Islamabad, leaving no-one behind for back-channel discussions

■ Israeli military says it struck Hezbollah rocket launchers; in Israeli villages near border, air raid sirens sounded

■ Kuwait arrests 24 people, including 5 former lawmakers, as part of probe into “financing of terrorist entities”

■ Iranian official says 3,375 people in country have been killed in the war so far

■ Russia's Putin tells Iran he is ready to help mediate peace efforts

■ Saudi Arabia's key east-west oil pipeline and other facilities restored



Smoke rises from the site of an Israeli airstrike in the southern Lebanese city of Nabatieh on Sunday. AFP



Effective immediately, the United States Navy, the Finest in the World, will begin the process of BLOCKADING any and all Ships trying to enter, or leave, the Strait of Hormuz. Any Iranian who fires at us, or at peaceful vessels, will be BLOWN TO HELL!

DONALD TRUMP, US President

More fighting on horizon

A sense of dread spread across West Asia after talks between the US and Iran collapsed. Questions about whether the two sides would continue to respect the two-week ceasefire was anybody's guess as both the Iranian and US delegations left Pakistan without a deal. **Details on Page 12**

Netanyahu in Lebanon

PM Benjamin Netanyahu said Sunday Israeli forces had eliminated the threat of an invasion by Hezbollah militants during a visit to troops in southern Lebanon. His visit comes before officials from Lebanon, Israel and the US are due to hold talks in Washington. “The war continues,” he said.

dance with specific regulations”.

It also said Iranian security forces had the strategic strait under full control. “All traffic... is under the full control of the

armed forces,” the Guards naval command said in a Persian language post on X.

“The enemy will become trapped in a deadly vortex in the strait if it makes the wrong

move,” it added.

Earlier, US Vice President JD Vance left Pakistan without a deal after weekend talks with a team led by Iran's parliamentary speaker Mohammad Bagher Ghalibaf.

“We leave here with a very simple proposal, a method of understanding that is our final and best offer. We'll see if the Iranians accept it,” Vance told reporters.

Ghalibaf said on social media on Sunday that deep distrust between the two sides posed an obstacle to reaching an agreement. The US had been “unable to gain the trust of the Iranian delegation in this round of talks,” he said. “Now it is time for it to decide whether it can earn our trust or not.” **► Iran, Page 3A**

Quickly

Cong MLAs in Delhi seeking Cabinet reshuffle

Amid Karnataka's leadership tussle, Over 20 Congress MLAs arrived here on Sunday to press the high command for a Cabinet reshuffle in the Siddaramaiah government and accommodate new faces. The legislators are planning to meet Central leaders, including Mallikarjun Kharge, K C Venugopal and Randeep Surjewala over the next two days. **Details on Page 3A**

Farmer killed in elephant attack

A 65-year-old farmer was trampled to death by a wild elephant in Kanaguppe village in Belur taluk of Hassan district, on Sunday morning. The farmer was identified as Rajashetty. He was working in his field when the elephant attacked him, said the officials. He died on the spot, added the officials. **Details on Page 3A**

TCS makes 25k fresher offers

TCS has made 25,000 offers to freshers for the current fiscal, and pointed out that the demand scenario will determine whether it hires more college graduates, a top official has said. The largest information technology services company had hired 44,000 freshers in FY26, one of the highest by any private sector employer in the country. **Details on Page 11**

The playful audacity of Asha Bhosle

S R RAMAKRISHNA

Asha Bhosle, who died at 92 on Sunday, was one of India's most enduring, prolific, and audacious playback singers.

Her voice offered not just sweetness but also teasing, departing from a style pioneered by her elder sister Lata. If Lata was pitch-perfect and honeyed, Asha presented a bolder, more playful portrayal of Indian womanhood.

Born Asha Mangeshkar on September 8, 1933, near Sangli in Maharashtra, she

grew up in a family steeped in music. Her father Dinanath Mangeshkar was a well-known classical vocalist and stage actor. He trained his children—Lata, Meena, Usha and Hridaynath—in classical music.

When Dinanath died young, Lata began supporting her siblings through her singing. Asha made her debut as a child artist in a Marathi film in 1943 and recorded her first Hindi song in 1948. That makes her singing career about eight decades long, a record by any world



Asha Bhosle
1933-2026

produced some of India's biggest hits. Lata's songs were impeccably sung, but her post-'80s songs, even in the estimation of her most ardent fans, were not her best. Asha, on the other hand, reigned longer and with far greater versatility. Where Lata's voice embodied the conventional ideal of the Indian woman—pious, long-suffering, and self-sacrificing—Asha infused Hindi film songs with intoxication and seductiveness.

► Asha Bhosle, Page 4
Related reports, Page 8

standards.

The two Mangeshkar sisters—Lata and Asha—ruled the Hindi film industry for about half a century, and

After Rs 2k-cr windfall, BDA set for third e-auction of bulk land

NAVEEN MENEZES
BENGALURU, DHNS

The Bangalore Development Authority (BDA) appears to be on a land-selling spree to fund its ambitious infrastructure plans.

Hot on the heels of two successful bulk land auctions — the first of which alone brought in a record Rs 2,097 crore — the BDA has launched its third e-auction in quick succession, this time offering over 47 plots in prime locations.

While the move follows

Up for grabs

47 plots in prime locations

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Rates: Rs 63,000-Rs 1.65L per sq metre based on locations	

“high” interest shown by buyers, it also raises questions over the classification of sites identified for commercial use.

► BDA, Page 4

Yoga can reduce gaming addiction, says study

KUSHAGRA BHARDWAJ
BENGALURU, DHNS

If you thought the answer to your teenager's gaming addiction was to unplug the router, science has a better plan. And it involves a lot of deep breathing. A study by Nimhans has found that structured yoga can reduce the growing concern of gaming disorder in adolescents.

The research was conducted by Nagalakshmi S Rao, PhD scholar, Department of Yoga and Life Sciences, SVYASA-Jigani, under the

guidance of Dr Raghavendra Bhat, Professor, Department of Yoga, Central University of Rajasthan and Dr Manoj Kumar Sharma, Professor of Clinical Psychology, Nimhans. Published in *Frontiers in Public Health*, the study is relevant owing to the overlap between Internet Gaming Disorder (IGD) and generalised internet addiction.

IGD is defined as an uncontrollable urge to game that begins to damage schoolwork, relationships and mental health.

► Gaming addiction, Page 4

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SMARTER SCANS

From dialysis to diagnosis: AI enters nephrology, questions follow

Better outcomes with data; doctors caution overuse of algorithms

AMULLYA SHIVASHANKAR
BENGALURU, DHNS

As Artificial Intelligence begins assisting treatments such as dialysis in government hospitals, questions emerge about how far these systems can align with clinical judgement and patient care.

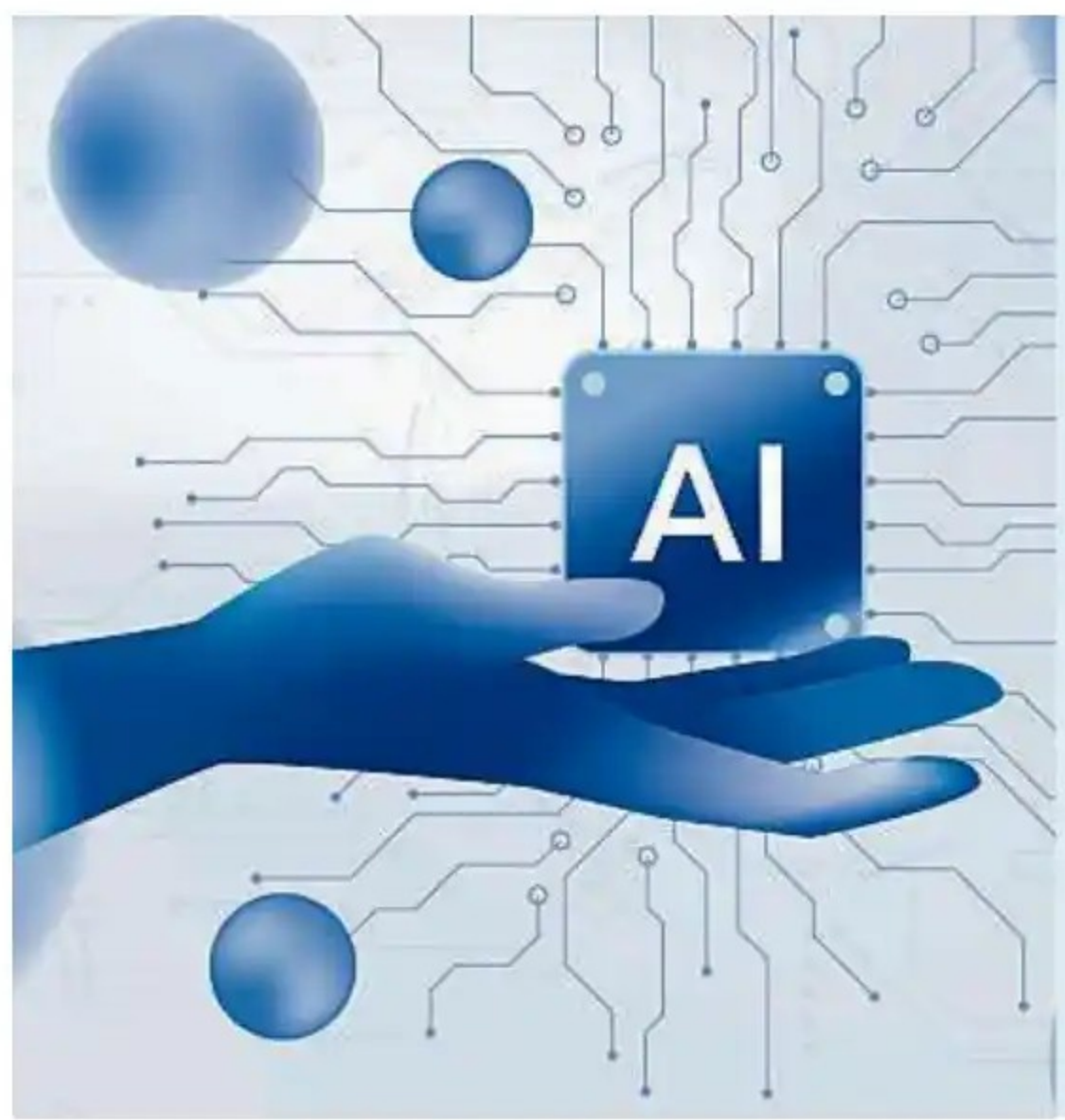
Doctors broadly agree that AI is a useful tool in treatment

and diagnosis. Yet, it also raises ethical dilemmas.

AI can play a major role in detecting chronic kidney disease (CKD) faster than traditional tests.

Speaking to *DH*, Dr Topoti Mukherjee, Lead Consultant, Nephrology and Kidney Transplant at a private hospital, said, "Some of the recent studies indicate that deep learning algorithms can identify CKD risk factors as much as 6 to 12 months prior compared with clinical diagnosis."

"In addition, Artificial Intelligence imaging using convolutional neural networks for renal scan analysis has been able to detect abnormalities in kidney structure



DR ARUN KUMAR J
Consultant Nephrologist

The conflict does happen and there are times when AI may not quite fit the clinical situation. Sometimes AI is picking up a trend that is not obvious at first glance. At the end of the day, the responsibility sits with the clinician. So, the final call has to come from us. AI can inform the decision, but it does not make it.

that are not visible via traditional imaging methods," she said.

This shift from reactive diagnosis to predictive risk stratification is particularly valuable in CKD,

which is often asymptomatic in its early stages.

Addressing the conflict between AI assessment and clinical assessment, Dr Arun Kumar J,

Consultant Nephrologist, said, "The conflict does happen and there are times when AI may not quite fit the clinical situation. Sometimes AI is picking up a trend that is not obvious at first glance."

"At the end of the day, the responsibility sits with the clinician. So, the final call has to come from us. AI can inform the decision, but it does not make it," he added.

Role in dialysis

AI is transforming dialysis by enabling more precise, personalised and safer treatment. It continuously monitors patient data such as blood pressure, fluid levels and toxin removal, predicts complications, and supports doctors in

adjusting care. This improves outcomes and reduces emergencies. It also lowers manual workload and enhances efficiency in dialysis centres, said Dr Kishan A, Consultant, Nephrology.

On the limitations of AI, he said, "However, its effectiveness depends on data quality, and it may miss sudden or rare complications. High costs, data privacy concerns, and the need for staff training remain challenges. AI cannot replace clinical judgement and requires constant human oversight to ensure safe, reliable and equitable dialysis care."

Ethical dilemma

Dr Anoop M Gowda MD, DNB (Nephrology), Senior Consultant

Nephrologist and Transplant Physician, said, "Using AI in healthcare raises ethical and practical concerns. Patient care largely relies on human interaction, which technology cannot replace. Questions of accountability remain unclear if outcomes are poor — whether responsibility lies with the doctor, developer, or system."

"AI also depends on costly infrastructure and data often drawn from Western populations, limiting relevance in India. While promising, AI must be used cautiously alongside clinical judgement, with doctors ultimately guiding decisions and intervening, when necessary," he said.

Women-led firms get digital boost

BENGALURU, DHNS: The UBUNTU Consortium has partnered with Hitachi Rail to roll out a digital growth initiative to strengthen women-led enterprises in Karnataka.

Under Hitachi Rail's Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) programme, thousands of women entrepreneurs across 10 associations will be trained in digital marketing to scale their businesses and access wider markets.

The partnership was formalised through an MoU exchange led by Head of Hitachi Rail India Manoj Kumar Krishnappa at the UBUNTU Consortium office in Bengaluru.

UBUNTU Founder-President and former Chief Secretary K Ratnaprabha said the collaboration would open avenues for skill development, supply chain integration, and business opportunities, particularly in infrastructure and allied sectors.

She said the initiative aims to enable women-led enterprises to participate in large-scale projects and global value chains.

As part of the initiative, 10 training programmes have been conducted across Bengaluru, Chintamani, Tumakuru, Bagalkot, Udipi, Kalaburagi, Hospet, Chitradurga, and Mandya.

Man dies by suicide after video call to 'girlfriend'

BENGALURU, DHNS: A 23-year-old man allegedly died by suicide in Attur Layout in Yelahanka New Town.

Police suspect a strained relationship may have led to the incident.

Abhishek, a BCom graduate working as a delivery executive at a private firm, reportedly made a video call to a woman he was in a relationship with on April 9.

During the call, he is said to have told her he intended to end his life. He later wrote a purported note and died by hanging, police said.

Investigations revealed that Abhishek was in a relationship with the woman, but her family opposed it and had previously filed a police complaint against him. He was called to the police station, counselled, and warned.

Following this, the woman distanced herself from him. Despite repeated attempts by Abhishek to contact her, she reportedly refused to engage.

Yelahanka New Town police have registered a case of unnatural death. The deceased's family has, however, blamed the woman for his death.

(If you are in distress or experiencing suicidal thoughts, please reach out to **KIRAN** helpline: 1800-599-0019, *Arogya Sahayvani*: 104)

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White elephant sans connectivity: Biocon chief on new stadium

Asks govt to first build roads, metro

BENGALURU, DHNS

Industrialist and Biocon founder Kiran Mazumdar-Shaw has raised concerns about the state government's plan to build an 80,000-seater international cricket stadium near Anekal in southern Bengaluru.

"Unless there is good road and metro connectivity, it will

be a white elephant," she wrote

on X, responding to reports that the Karnataka Housing Board (KHB) has invited tenders for the New Bengaluru International Cricket Stadium at Suryanagar 4th Phase.

"Please build connectivity before the stadium," she wrote, adding that the metro currently "ends far short of Anekal" and that the area's



Kiran Mazumdar-Shaw

Project update

■ The BMRCCL has submitted the feasibility report to the government and will prepare the detailed project report if further approvals come through.

■ Construction may begin by 2029 and take up to 10 years.

road infrastructure is "primitive".

The stadium, estimated to cost Rs 943 crore, is intended to ease pressure on the M Chinnaswamy Stadium in the Central Business District (CBD), which has long struggled with capacity and congestion.

The Bangalore Metro Rail Corporation Limited (BMRCCL) has conducted a feasibility study on expanding its largest proposed corridor with a branch line to connect the stadium. The government has asked it to add a 4-km spur line to the 68-km Kalena Agrahara-Kadugodi Tree Park metro corridor planned under Phase 4.

"The spur line will branch off after Jigani towards Anekal. It will allow people coming from Bannerghatta and Anekal to reach the stadium directly," a BMRCCL official said.

DH was the first to report the development in October 2025. The proposal remains far from breaking ground.

The BMRCCL has submitted the feasibility report to the gov-

ernment and will prepare the detailed project report if further approvals come through. Construction may begin by 2029 and take up to 10 years.

Three access points

Real estate expert Pruthvin Reddy from Anekal said the stadium had been proposed with three access points. Two of the roads are narrow; the third is a proposed six-lane stretch under the Satellite Town Ring Road (STRR).

Reddy said the stadium announcement had already driven up real estate prices.

"The KHB will be able to sell its sites in Surya Nagar 4th Phase for a premium," he said, adding that overall infrastructure in the area is still catching up.

Students abduct hostel mate, demand Rs 50,000 ransom

Cops use digital surveillance to track car, rescue 19-yr-old victim within 4 hours

BENGALURU, DHNS

Four students at a private college abducted a college mate near his hostel in BTM Layout for ransom.

Madiwala police foiled the plan within four hours.

The 19-year-old victim, a native of Odisha, was forcibly taken in an electric car and held in an old house in Jayanagar on Saturday night. Threatened with a knife and a fake pistol, he was asked to transfer Rs 50,000 via UPI or face death.

Madiwala police acted swiftly after a call to the 112-emergency helpline. Using digital surveillance, they tracked the car used in the abduction and

freed the victim within four hours.

The victim is a first-year BBM student at a city college. He was abducted from outside his hostel around 7.50 pm.

A police officer close to the investigation said the plan was hatched by Shourya Agarwal, a fellow student from Kerala, with help from Aditya Bhonele from Maharashtra, Nikunj from Bihar, and Syed Bilal from Jayanagar. All are aged between 19 and 23 years.

Nikunj brought his father's electric car to carry out the abduction. Aditya, a freelance digital marketer, joined the group in taking the victim to Bilal's house in Jayanagar.

The suspects used a knife and fake pistol to intimidate the victim, even asking him which weapon should be used to kill him, while demanding Rs 50,000 via UPI. They also called his friends and family seeking money.

Police transferred some money to the suspects to ensure they did not harm the vic-

Police believe the suspects are habitual offenders and are investigating their possible involvement in a similar case in which a student from Andhra Pradesh was abducted and Rs 40,000 was extorted from him.

tim until he was freed around midnight.

Police believe the suspects are habitual offenders and are investigating their possible involvement in a similar case in which a student from Andhra Pradesh was abducted and Rs 40,000 was extorted from him.

Investigators also found that Bilal was previously involved in an extortion case. Obscene photos and videos of many women were recovered from his phone.

A Bengaluru court has remanded all four suspects in judicial custody.

Vendor crushed between reversing car, parked bus

BENGALURU, DHNS

A 50-year-old fruit vendor was killed after being crushed between a reversing car and a parked bus at the Mysore Road Satellite Bus Stand early Sunday.

The deceased, M Swami Dorai, had just arrived from Tamil Nadu with his wife Jayashree and was walking towards the BMTC station around 4.30 am when the incident occurred, police said.

The couple live in Srinivasa Nagar, off Magadi Road.

Police said the incident occurred when a parking lot attendant was attempting to rearrange vehicles. A car owner had parked his vehicle earlier and handed over the

keys to the staff. When another vehicle arrived, the attendant began reversing the car to create space.

"The attendant lost control while reversing. The car struck Dorai, pinning him against a bus parked nearby," a police officer said. "The impact left Dorai with severe injuries."

Passersby and bus stand staff rushed to his aid, but he succumbed to his injuries while being shifted to Victoria Hospital for emergency treatment.

Byatarayanapura traffic police have registered a case of causing death by negligence and sections related to drunk driving under the Motor Vehicles Act against the parking lot attendant, Balasubramaniam. The vehicle has been seized.



Swami Dorai

Woman dies 2 weeks after being stabbed by brother, nephew

BENGALURU, DHNS: An elderly woman who was stabbed during a family dispute has succumbed to her injuries, police said.

Mageshwari, a resident of Ambedkar Nagar in Adugodi, was allegedly attacked by her younger brother Manivanan, his son Manikiran, and two family friends, Stephen and Abhishek.

The family hails from Tamil Nadu.

Mageshwari's granddaughter, Charulatha, was married to Manikiran, but had separated from him due to differences and was living with her grandmother.

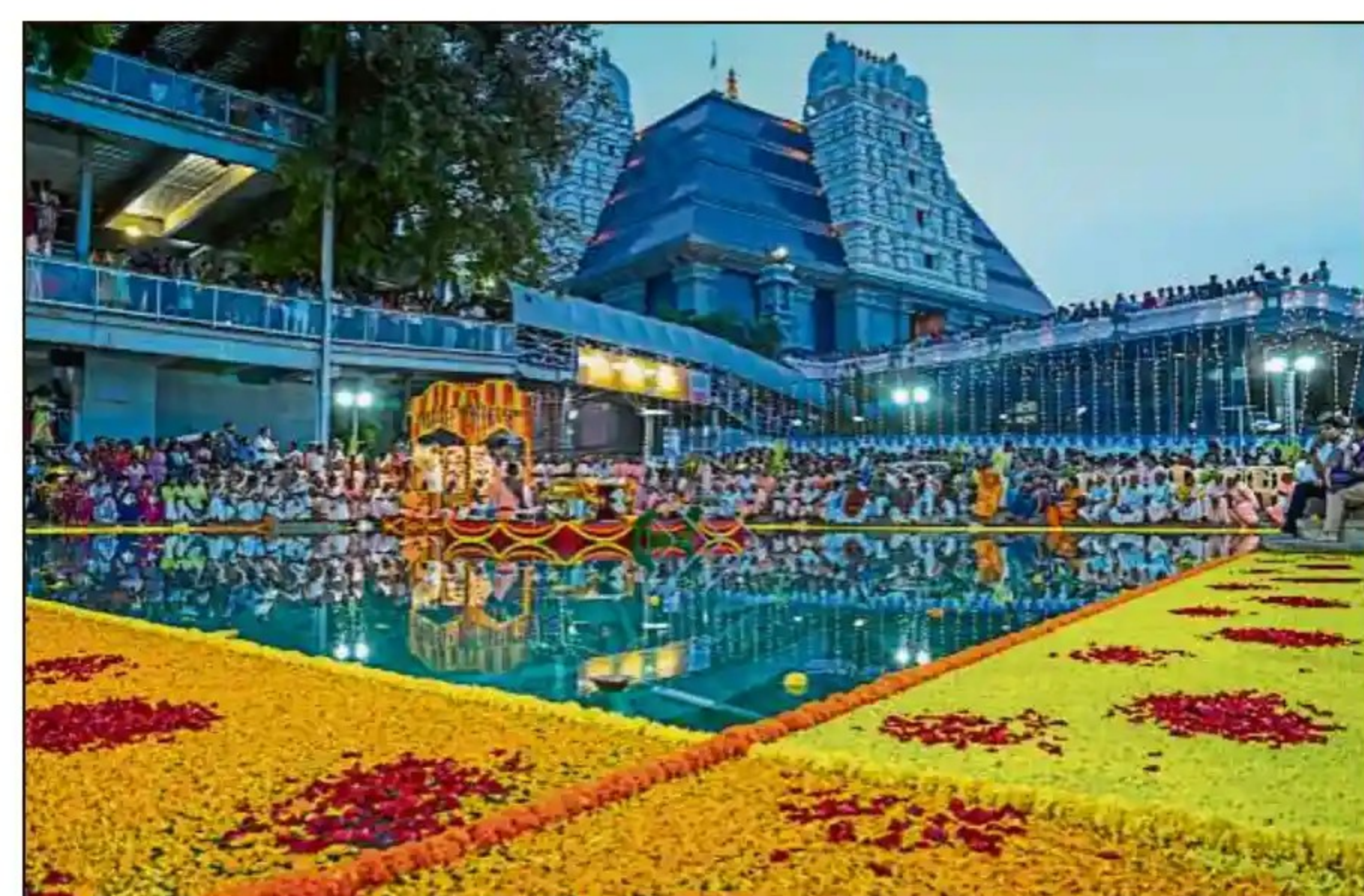
Despite repeated attempts by Manikiran and his family to reconcile, she refused to return.

On March 25, Manikiran went to Mageshwari's house and picked a quarrel. The situation escalated when they tried to forcibly take Charulatha with them.

When Mageshwari intervened, she was allegedly assaulted and stabbed.

She sustained severe injuries, was admitted to hospital, and succumbed on Saturday, police said.

Adugodi police have taken all the accused into custody and are interrogating them.



Devotees participated in the Krishna Radhe Theppotsava held during the annual Brahmotsava and Rajata Mahotsava organised at Iskcon temple in Rajajinagar on Sunday.

DH PHOTO/MS MANJUNATH

Lakhs throng Hare Krishna Hill as Iskcon's Brahmotsava ends

BENGALURU, DHNS: Lakhs of devotees thronged Hare Krishna Hill in Rajajinagar as Iskcon's 29th Brahmotsava of Sri Radha Krishnachandra concluded on Sunday.

The 12-day festival, which began on April 1, drew devotees from across the globe, organisers said.

The festivities ended on Sunday evening with the Theppotsava (boat festival). The utsava deities, seated on a Pushpa Pallakki adorned with fragrant garlands, were taken to the temple kalyani for a ceremonial boat ride amid festive lights and kirtans.

The festival featured daily evening processions on various vahanas, including Hanumanad, Garuda and Ananta Shesha.

On April 10, the deities were offered a vishesha ankara and a naivedya of 108 items.

Sugunendratirtha Swami of Puthige Mutt and Vidyavalabhathirtha of Kaniyoor Mutt attended the event. Each evening also featured classical dance, plays and devotional music.

Iskcon president Madhu Pandita Dasa said the festival continues to strengthen bonds of faith.

"It gives us great joy to see families, children and youth coming together in devotion and carrying these memories for a lifetime," he said.

Madhu added that thousands also participated virtually through global live streams.

interactive and effective manner.

Grievances and issues related to public utility agencies such as Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike (BBMP), Bangalore Water Supply and Sewerage Board (BWSSB), Bangalore Metropolitan Transport Corporation (BMTC) and Bangalore

Electricity Supply Company Limited (Bescom) would be highlighted in the weekly column.

The writeups, which could be accompanied by photographs highlighting the problems, will be published on Mondays. Mail your grievances to: **peoplesproblems@deccanherald.co.in**

ting measures linked to alleged commission-based corruption?
A resident

Issues at KSR Bengaluru railway station

The KSR Bengaluru railway station continues to face several serious shortcomings that require urgent attention.

At the extreme left entrance near the unreserved ticket counter, a door-frame metal detector has been installed before the escalator, under police supervision, to

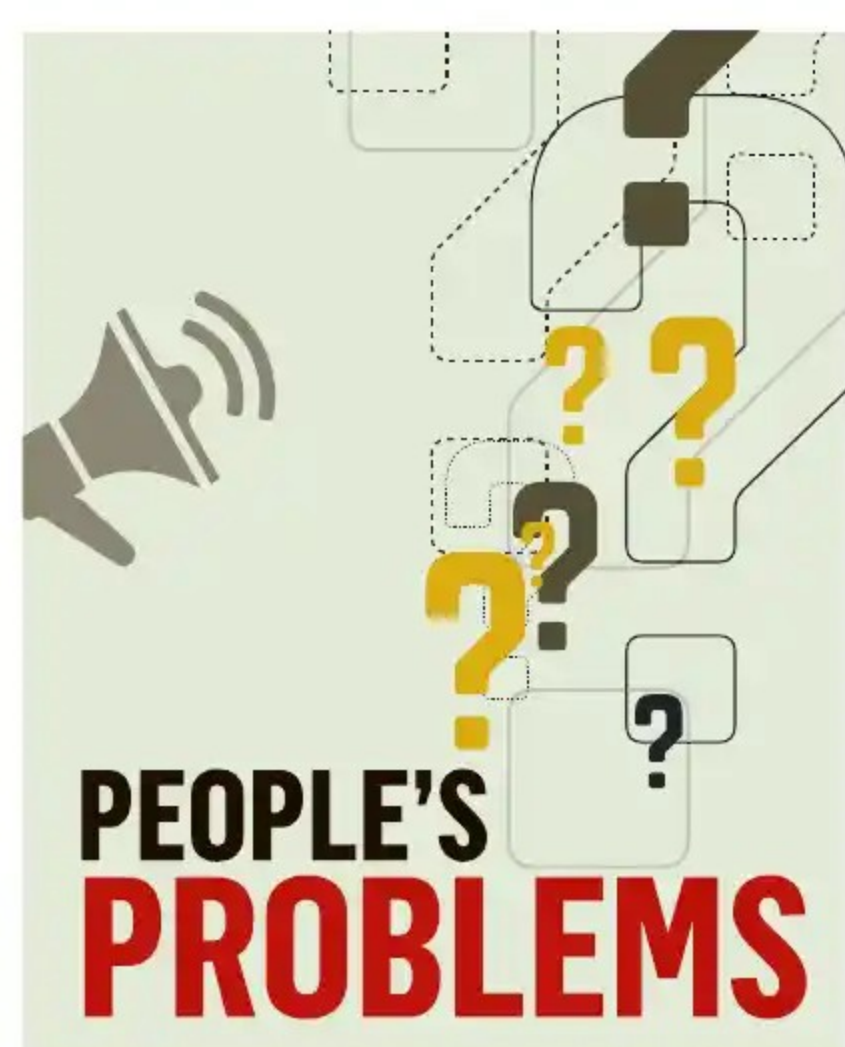
ensure passengers screen their baggage.

However, this measure is easily bypassed, as most people simply use the adjacent staircase, effectively defeating the purpose of the security check. Security personnel are often seen disengaged, with little effort made to enforce compliance.

Moreover, passengers can freely access Platform 1 from the main entrance, where no metal detector is installed at all, raising further concerns about lapses in basic security protocols.

In addition to these issues, many coaches display incorrect destination boards. This misleads travellers and forces them to repeatedly verify details with passersby or vendors, creating confusion and increasing the risk of boarding the wrong train.

I urge the South Western Railway (SWR) to take immediate corrective action to address these deficiencies and ensure the safety and convenience of the public.
N Devarajan
BTM Layout



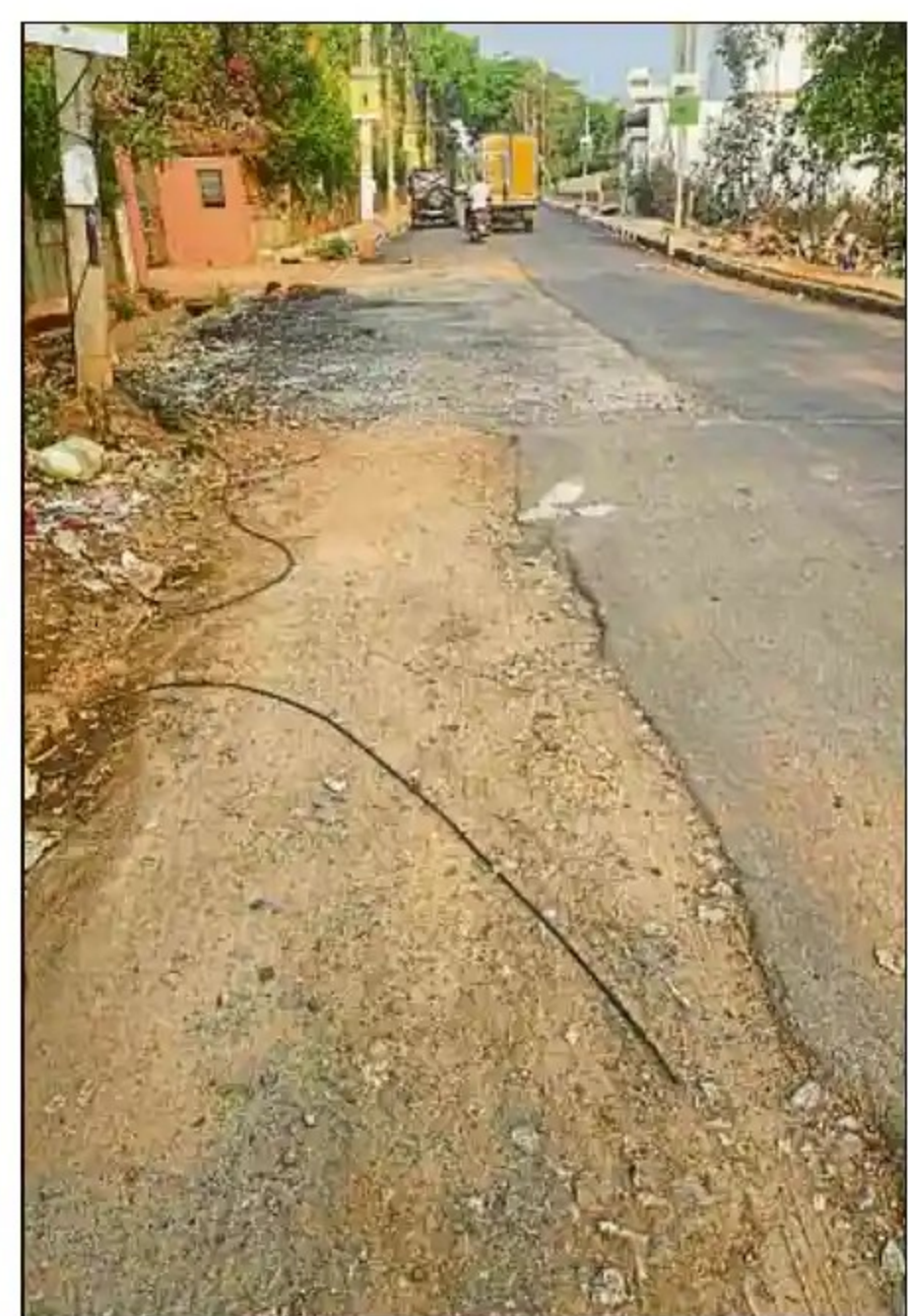
Need a hand? Write to us

Letters of grievances are pouring in and we are doing our best to accommodate as many as possible. Readers may write in to highlight civic problems affecting their locality and we will help address them in an

Ill-designed roads of Shivaram Karanth Layout

The Bangalore Development Authority (BDA) has proceeded with the development of the Dr Shivaram Karanth Layout in northern Bengaluru with undue haste and insufficient planning.

As of today, it is evident that several roads have been laid with poor design and a lack of basic engineering standards. There is a growing concern that the contractor(s) may be attempting to secure bill clearances without fully completing the work.



Several roads have been laid with poor design and a lack of basic engineering standards.

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Farmer killed in wild jumbo attack in Belur

BELUR (HASSANDIST), DHNS: A farmer was trampled to death by a wild elephant at Kanaguppe village in Belur taluk of Hassan district on Sunday morning.

Rajashetty (65), a resident of the village, is the deceased. It is said that Rajashetty had gone to his farmland in the morning, when a wild jumbo hiding in a bush attacked him.

The jumbo reportedly caught the farmer with its trunks and threw him away. Later, it also trampled him. Rajashetty died on the spot.

Even after the incident, the wild jumbo did not leave the place and was standing near the body for a while, creating fear among the residents of the village.

Forest department officers and police officials visited the spot and drove the wild jumbo into the forest.

Irked over the incident, the villagers staged a flash protest against the forest department.

Deputy Commissioner K S Lathakumar and MLA H K Suresh visited the spot and consoled the family members.

They also presented a compensation cheque of Rs 20 lakh to the family members of the deceased.

Study flags regional inequality in K'taka's public health sector

Points to critical shortages in North Karnataka districts

**ASRA MAVAD
BENGALURU, DHNS**

A recent study on Karnataka's public health system shows that while the state has expanded its healthcare network over the years, critical shortages persist at the grassroots level. It particularly highlights regional inequality within the state, raising concerns over equitable access to basic health services.

The study, titled 'Regional inequality in Health Infrastructure of Primary Health Care Institutions in Karnataka', is co-authored by C M Lakshmana, professor and head, Population Research Centre at the

Institute of Social and Economic Change (ISEC) and Devindra, research investigator.

Karnataka currently has 2,524 Primary Health Centres (PHCs), 9,278 sub-centres, and 212 Community Health Centres (CHCs), across 31 districts and 30,715 villages. However, these numbers fall short when assessed against population norms prescribed under the Indian Public Health Standards (IPHS 2022).

The most glaring deficit is seen in rural sub-centres. Karnataka requires 9,638 sub-centres, but has only 8,762 in place, indicating a shortfall of 876 centres. This gap is most acute in North Karnataka dis-

tricts such as Belagavi, Raichur, Vijayapura, and Kalaburagi, which report some of the highest deficiencies. Belagavi alone faces a shortfall of 170 rural sub-centres - highest in the state.

In contrast, several southern districts show a surplus. Hassan, for instance, has an excess of 115 rural sub-centres and 78 rural PHCs, reflecting a stark regional imbalance.

The study highlights that while southern Karnataka broadly meets or exceeds infrastructure norms, northern regions consistently fall behind.

"Overall, Karnataka has been a pioneer in public health at the national level. But when we look deeper into the numbers, the number of health centres doesn't match the population norms, displaying a deep-seated regional inequality. We wanted to highlight this imbalance. Health is a state matter, and politics has played

PROF C M LAKSHMANA
Population Research Centre-ISEC

Overall, Karnataka has been a pioneer in public health at the national level. But when we look deeper into the numbers, the number of health centres doesn't match the population norms, displaying a deep-seated regional inequality. We wanted to highlight this imbalance. Health is a state matter, and politics has played a big role in furthering this inequality.

a big role in furthering this inequality," said Lakshmana, adding that while the IPHS 2022 requires one PHC each to be established for a population of 25,000 to 30,000. South Karnataka has an individual PHC established even for a population of 10,000 in some districts.

Urban infra under strain

Urban healthcare infrastructure is also under strain, states the study. Bengaluru Urban district records a shortfall of 125 Urban Primary Health Centres (UPHCs), largely due to rapid urbanisation and migration. Overall, all four revenue divisions in the state report shortages of urban sub-centres, with the Kalaburagi division facing the highest deficit at 91%. Human resource shortages further add to the problem. Across PHCs, there are only 2,052 doctors in rural areas and 368 in urban centres, alongside gaps in pharmacists, lab technicians, and nursing staff. Specialists at CHCs, such as surgeons and paediatricians, remain particularly scarce.

The study calls for targeted interventions to bridge these gaps, warning that without addressing regional disparities, the state's primary healthcare system will struggle to meet growing population demands.

Shivakumar accepts Jabbar's resignation, dissolves Congress minority cell

BENGALURU, DHNS

KPCC president D K Shivakumar on Sunday accepted the resignation of MLC Abdul K Jabbar as chairman of the state Congress minority cell.

In a press release, Shivakumar - also the deputy chief minister - said the minority cell committee had been dissolved with immediate effect.

The decision comes in the backdrop of reports that there were attempts by Jabbar and others to "sabotage" the prospects of Congress candidate Samarth Mallikarjun in the just-concluded byelection to the Davangere South constituency. The bypoll was necessitated due to the demise of Congress veteran and eminent Lingayat leader Shamanur Shivashankarappa - Samarth's grandfather.

During ticket distribution, there was widespread discontent within the Muslim community over being denied the ticket in a constituency where the community is said to have

around 75,000-80,000 votes. Jabbar was considered to be one of the probable candidates.

A senior Congress leader told *DH* that Shivakumar would seek a report from the Davangere unit of the party on Jabbar's role in the by-election.

"There was a report that Congressmen themselves tried to sabotage the party's chances in the by-election and defeat our candidate. The All India Congress Committee (AICC) is aware of all these things. Abhishek Dutt, AICC secretary in charge of the elections, was in the constituency for 20 days and submitted a report on some people trying to defeat Congress candidate Samarth. The developments related to Jabbar came against this backdrop," the person added.

However, the leader excluded confidence that the Congress would win the Davangere South constituency, despite the alleged attempts at sabotage.

MLA hails HC order for CBI probe into Hebbal land transfer

BENGALURU, DHNS: Rajajinagar MLA S Suresh Kumar on Sunday said he felt "immense joy and renewed confidence" after the High Court of Karnataka quashed the controversial transfer of 55 acres of prime land in Hebbal to a non-existent private entity and ordered a CBI investigation.

"I had written countless letters to the chief minister, the deputy chief minister and the industries minister demanding this transfer be cancelled but my appeals fell on deaf ears. Now, the high court has delivered what the government refused to," he stated.

The court annulled the transfer of land in Hebbal and Amani Kere, which were handed over to a company called Lake View Tourism Corporation.

It also directed the CBI to probe how the state government transferred such valuable public land for what it said were "personal motives."

Bangalore Metro Rail Corporation Limited (BMRL) had long sought this land to build a multi-modal transit hub, including a depot, and offered to pay the required compensation. Despite this, the land was quietly transferred to the private entity, bypassing BMRL's requests.

Kumar said the state's top leadership remained "bound by their personal interests" and refused to act despite repeated requests.

Over 20 Cong MLAs in Delhi with Cabinet reshuffle demand

10 more to join them today; group to meet party's top leaders

NEW DELHI, DHNS

Over 20 Congress MLAs from Karnataka arrived here on Sunday to press the high command for a reshuffle of Chief Minister Siddaramaiah's Cabinet, so as to accommodate new faces.

State's special representative in Delhi T B Jayachandra, P M Ashok Pattan, A R Krishnamurthy, Belur Gopalakrishna, Narayanaswamy, D G Shantanagouda, Shadakshari, C Puttaranga Shetty, Ravi Ganiga, B Shivan and Hampanagouda Badarli and others have already arrived in the national capital. Another over 10 MLAs are to join them by Monday morning.

The legislators are planning to meet the party's central leaders, including Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge, general secretary (organisation) K C Venugopal and general secretary (incharge of Karnataka) Randeep Surjewala over the next two days. This follows a strategy meeting in Bengaluru last month, where they deliberated on their demands.

While Siddaramaiah's camp is pushing for a Cabinet reshuffle, Deputy Chief Minister D K Shivakumar, who is eyeing the CM's post, is opposed to the reshuffle.

Currently, two Cabinet

berths are vacant due to the resignation of K N Rajanna and B Nagendra.

Senior leader Rahul Gandhi has indicated that Siddaramaiah and Shivakumar would be summoned to Delhi next month after results of the elections to five state Assemblies are out, to settle the leadership issue.

The party's top brass is also said to be in favour of a Cabinet reshuffle by replacing nearly 20 ministers with new faces, sources said.

The MLAs clarified that they were not in Delhi to lobby for either Siddaramaiah or Shivakumar camp, but to remind the high command of the reshuffle.

"Over 30 MLAs including senior legislators and first-timers will be in Delhi by tomorrow morning. We have already had a meeting with the chief minister in this regard. The same demand will be placed before the top leaders here," Badarli told reporters.

"The high command had promised a Cabinet reshuffle after two years of the government formation. It's more than two and a half years now. Yet, no reshuffle has been effected. We will remind the leaders about it," he said.

Ashok Pattan, said to be close to Siddaramaiah, said with just about two years left of the term of the present Assembly, it was time for a reshuffle. "If same set of people become ministers every time, what about others," he asked.

"Our demand is for Cabinet reshuffle. The issue of change of leadership is left to the high command," Krishnamurthy told reporters.

HAIL HARBINGER OF HOPE



Colourful lights, banners and cutouts of Dr B R Ambedkar adorn Jagat Circle in the heart of Kalaburagi, ahead of Ambedkar Jayanti on Sunday. The birth anniversary of the architect of the Constitution is on Tuesday. DH PHOTO/TAJUDDIN AZAD

Dr Rajkumar's long-lost autobiography now in book form

BENGALURU, DHNS

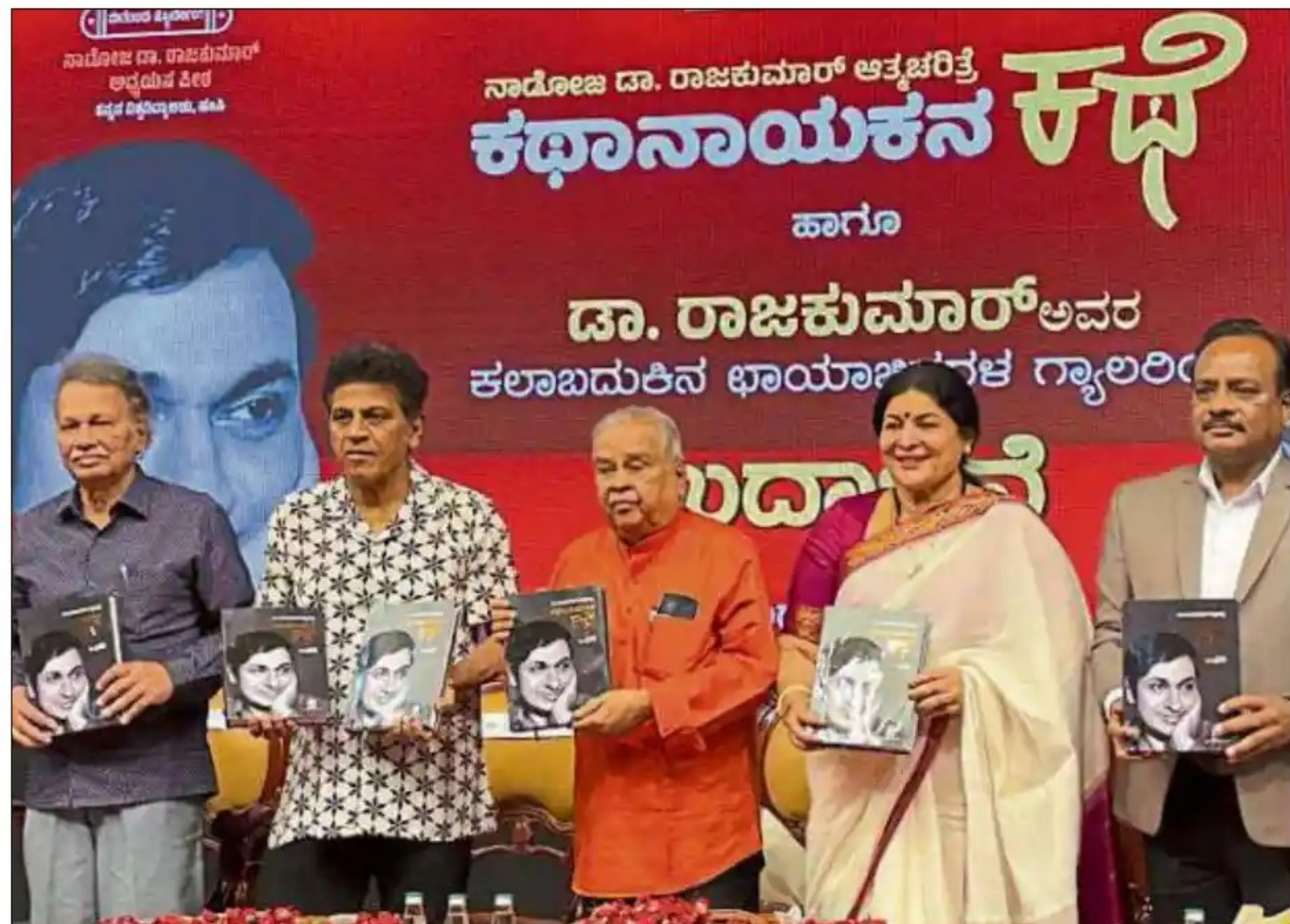
Decades after it first appeared as a serialised column in a film magazine, the definitive autobiography of Kannada matinee idol Dr Rajkumar was officially released on his 20th death anniversary on Sunday.

At the event to release *Kathanayakana Kathe* (The Hero's Story), Dr Rajkumar's son and actor Shivarajkumar; Chi Rudrath, actor and nephew of autobiographer Chi Dattaraj; writer Baraguru Ramachandrappa and senior film personalities Jayamala and Bhargava were present.

The journey to bring out this book was nothing short of a cinematic thriller.

Prof A S Prabhakar, coordinator of the Dr Rajkumar Study Chair at Kannada University, Hampi, detailed the arduous hunt for the original manuscripts. The autobiography was originally narrated by Dr Rajkumar to Dattaraj—brother of legendary lyricist Chi Udayashankar—and published in 94 episodes in the magazine *Vijayachitra* between 1975 and 1984.

However, finding the physical copies proved nearly impossible.



Writer Baraguru Ramachandrappa, actor Shivarajkumar, director H R Bhargava, actor Jayamala and Hampi Kannada University vice-chancellor Prof D V Parashivamurthy release matinee idol Dr Rajkumar's autobiography 'Kathanayakana Kathe' in Bengaluru on Sunday. DH PHOTO/ASHWIN B M

"We first looked toward Chennai, only to learn that the *Vijayachitra* archives had been destroyed in a fire," recounted Prabhakar, who compiled the work.

"We then approached (book collector) Anke Gowda, but the copies he held had already been lent out for a web series project. We even tracked down the family of a former makeup man, only to be told by them that his collection had been

discarded in a dustbin after his passing."

The breakthrough came via two ardent fans in Rajajinagar, Ravishankar and Raju. The duo had preserved the magazines like sacred relics, but were initially hesitant to part with them.

"They interrogated us in 'police-style' for two hours," Prabhakar joked.

"They wanted to ensure we weren't doing this for profit or personal fame. Once con-

vinced, they asked us to meet them at Dr Rajkumar's samadhi. They placed the magazines on the memorial, performed puja and then handed them over to us."

The project received its final boost when Guru Dutt, nephew of Dattaraj, discovered nearly 1,000 pages of the original handwritten manuscript by his uncle. This find ensured that the book stayed true to Annavu's original voice.

Prof Ramachandrappa said Dr Rajkumar remained perhaps the only Indian actor to have inspired hundreds of scholarly works.

He described him as a '*Praja Pratibha*' (citizens' talent), who portrayed various dimensions of human life on the silver screen.

He emphasised that works like *Kathanayakana Kathe* are not just books, but historical records of a man who transformed from a simple actor into a cultural institution of Karnataka.

Shivarajkumar pointed out an irony that defines his father's greatness. "My father only studied till class 3. Yet today, a university (Hampi University) has brought out the book. That is the power of his legacy."

Trump threatens to block...

Iran, From Page 1

Iran had very good initiatives to show goodwill in talks with the US which led to progress in the negotiations, Ghalibaf said in comments carried by state media on Sunday. He said Trump's new threats will have no effect on Iran. "If you fight, we will fight, and if you come forward with logic, we will deal with logic," he said.

A US official said Iran had rejected Washington's call for an end to all uranium enrichment, the dismantling of all major enrichment facilities and the transfer of highly enriched uranium. The two sides also failed to reach

agreement on the US demand that Iran cease funding for Hamas, Hezbollah and the Houthis as well as fully open the strait, the official added.

Iran's President Masoud Pezeshkian, who discussed the talks in a call with Russian President Vladimir Putin, said Tehran wanted "a balanced and fair agreement".

"If the United States returns to the framework of international law, reaching an agreement is not far off," he told Putin, Iranian state media reported.

Iran's semi-official Tasnim news agency said "excessive" US demands had hindered reaching a deal.

◆ IN THE CITY ◆

GENERAL

10th National Techno Exhibition: Ramanagouda V Nadagouda, M Mahadev, R Krishnamurthy, S Shivamallu, and BN Umesh to attend; S Mariswamy to preside; Sports Complex and PLN Stadium, Dr Ambedkar Institute of Technology, Mallathahalli; 10 am.

Ambedkar Habbu: Discussion, ideas and celebration of Ambedkar for youth; Sphoorthidhama, Anjananagar, Magadi Main Road; 11 am.

CULTURAL

88th Sree Ramaseva Mandali Music Festival: Concerts by Pradyumna Bhat and team; Carnatic classical music by Kruti Bhat, Vitthal Rangan, KU Jayachandra Rao, and Sukanya Ramgopal; Fort High School Grounds, Chamarajpet; 5 pm.

33rd Sree Ramanavami Music Festival: Vocal recital by RK Padmanabha, accompanied by Keshava Mohan Kumar (violin), Renuka Prasad (mridanga) and Vyasa Vitthala (khanjiri); Sree Vani Kala Kendra, Basaveshwaranagar; 6.30 pm.

Religious discourse on Srimal Ramayana: Kallapura Pavanacharya; Vyalikaval Extension Association; Sree Rama Mandira, 9th Main, 14th Cross, Vyalikaval; 6.30 pm.

Discourse on 'Samagra Mahabharata': Vyasanakere Prabhjanacharya; Poornaprajna Vidyaapeetha, Kathriguppe Main Road; 6.30 pm.

26th Pravachana Vahini: Message of Bhagavata by Ashokacharya Joshi; Samskrutika Mandira, Ragigudda Sri Prasanna Anjaneyaswamy Bhakta Mandali Trust, Jayanagar; 6.30 pm.

◆ CITY WEATHER ◆

FORECAST

Partly cloudy sky

TEMPERATURES

Maximum	34.4°C
Minimum	24.0°C
Rainfall (as of 8:30 am)	
Humidity (as of 5:30 pm)	
Sunset (April 13)	6:32 pm
Sunrise (April 14)	6:09 am
Moonrise	2:14 am
Moonset	1:59 pm

(Relevant data recorded at 5.30 pm) Source: IMD

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JOB VACANCY

APPLICATIONS ARE INVITED FOR THE VARIOUS POSTS. LAST DATE FOR SUBMISSION OF APPLICATION IS 28 APR 2026. DETAILS ARE AVAILABLE AT <https://rsaibangalore.in/download>

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VACANCY NOTICE

NOTICE FOR THE VACANCIES OF THE FOLLOWING POSTS AT C-DOT

Applications are invited from the eligible candidates for filling up the below mentioned posts at C-DOT:

Sl	Name of Post	Mode	Pay Level as per 7 CPC	No. of Vacancy	Location
1.	Scientist-B/C	On Direct Recruitment	Level 10/11	14	Delhi/ Bengaluru
2	Consultant - Vigilance	On Contractual Basis	As per Govt. norms	2	01-Delhi 01- Bengaluru

Interested & Eligible Candidates may apply and submit their applications in online mode only. For detailed information including the Job description and application process, please visit the 'Careers' section of the C-DOT website: https://www.cdott.in/cdotweb/web/careers.php?lang=en#current_openings
Last date of application is 30 days from the date of publication in Employment News (English). All Government candidates are to route their application through proper channel as per details given in the website.

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Centre to study status of India's grasslands to boost conservation

CHIRANJEEVI KULKARNI
BENGALURU, DHNS

In a move that will finally throw light on the need to save grasslands and recognise their role in conservation of endangered species, the Standing Committee of the National Board for Wildlife has directed the Wildlife Institute of India (WII) and others to prepare an 'Atlas of Grasslands of India', including the status and biodiversity associated with such ecosystems.

For years, conservationists have been urging the government to recognise that conserving grasslands was as important as wooded forest areas. Forest authorities in some states had moved to plant trees in open environments, disturbing the unique ecosystems of grasslands. A recent study had shown that such mismanagement of Jayamangali Conservation Reserve in Karnataka had driven blackbucks outside the reserve.

The move comes following a discussion on a proposal submitted by the Centre of Excellence-Sustainable Land Management (CoE-SLM), Indian Council of Forestry Research and Education. The standing committee was briefed that grasslands and rangelands are defined in different ways across the country depending on revenue land-use classes, land cover reporting and ecological mapping of open natural ecosystems. Further, the presentation noted that

the area of grasslands is often under-reported because of misclassification of these areas in the government record as wasteland or scrubs. "Therefore, estimates vary and require harmonisation through improved mapping," it had said.

Noting the importance of such ecosystems for dry land resilience, experts from IC-FRE stressed the need for a robust "vegetation-type and dominant species-based approach" for classification of grasslands. Moreover, grasslands have carbon sequestration potential of about 2.3 to 7.3 billion tonnes of CO2 per year as per global estimates and that these ecosystems hold "nearly one-third" of terrestrial carbon with about 90% of it stored below the ground. Further, they offer the co-benefits of biodiversity conservation, land degradation neutrality and climate resilience.

During the standing committee's recent meeting, Karnataka, Rajasthan, Gujarat, Madhya Pradesh and Jammu & Kashmir underscored the need to save grasslands for wildlife conservation. The states sought amendments to law to recognise grassland restoration under compensatory afforestation mechanisms and the need for acknowledging grasslands as essential ecosystems that have to be protected and restored while balancing grazing requirements and livelihood dependencies.

Train disruptions

BENGALURU, DHNS: The railways will cancel or partially cancel the following trains: Trains 16239/16240 Chikkamagaluru-Yeshwantpur-Chikkamagaluru Daily Express and 12614 KSR Bengaluru-Mysuru Express will be cancelled on April 15.

Train number 66550 KSR Bengaluru-Jolarpettai MEMU will be partially cancelled between Somanayakanpatti and Jolarpettai on April 21 and 28.

Train number 66549 Jolarpettai-KSR Bengaluru MEMU will be partially cancelled between Jolarpettai and Somanayakanpatti on April 21 and 28.

Train number 20652 Talguppa-KSR Bengaluru Daily Express will terminate at Arsikere on April 15.

Train number 12725 KSR Bengaluru-Dharwad Siddaganga Daily Express will originate from Arsikere instead of KSR Bengaluru at its scheduled departure time on April 15.

Train number 12726 Dharwad-KSR Bengaluru Siddaganga Daily Express will terminate at Arsikere on April 15.

In garb of guided tour, fakes take visitors for a ride at tourist spots

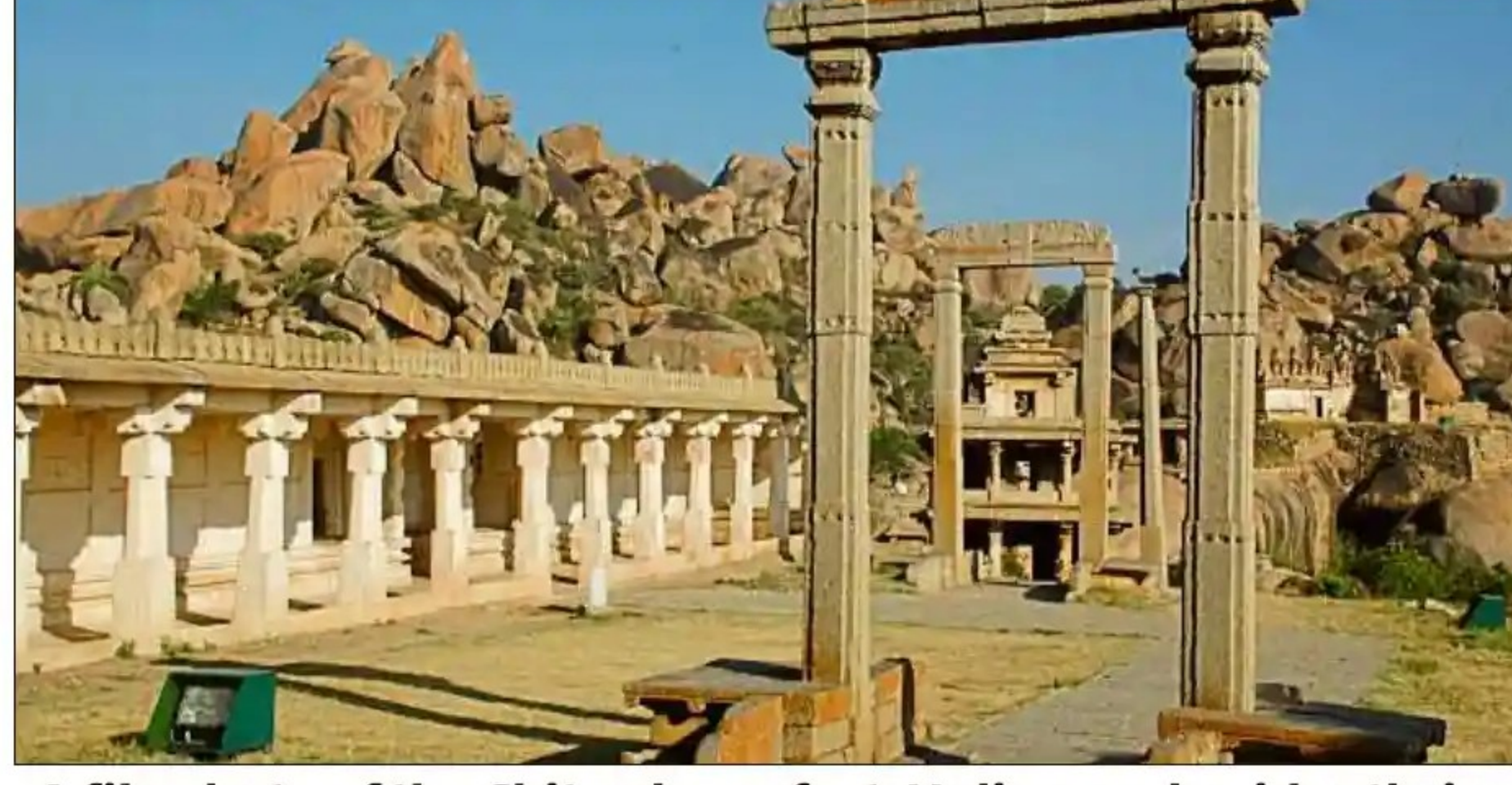
Self-proclaimed guides peddle unverified facts to travellers

AMULLYA SHIVASHANKAR
BENGALURU, DHNS

As the tourism season brings back crowds to historical and tourist destinations, a parallel ecosystem of unlicensed tour guides operating without training or licence is thriving in the state.

From Doddagana Ganapathi temple to Bengaluru fort, unverified, half-baked information is being conveyed to tourists, licensed guides in the city say.

S Pradeep, a licensed tour guide for over 30 years, said: "There are only four or five licensed guides in Bengaluru. Others purchase entry ticket to the monument, go inside the place and pressure tourists in



A file photo of the Chitradurga fort. Unlicensed guides thrive in many of the state's popular tourist destinations, with no system in place to identify and prevent them from taking visitors on 'guided tours'.

No preventive mechanism in place: Officer

The government currently has no mechanism to control unlicensed guides, said Akram Pasha, managing director, Karnataka State Tourism Development Corporation. "We do not have any mechanism against unlicensed guides nor are we planning any measures now," he said.

They have decided to not let anyone else come in and successfully prevented the invasion of unlicensed guides".

The recent emergence of a few online apps and websites have added to the problem.

Naveen Kumar T N, a licensed guide in Bengaluru, said: "A lot of these apps bring their own people. We do not know what they tell the tourists. People who have no knowledge of concepts like history, architecture or archaeology have become self-proclaimed guides. If any untoward incidents happen, they cannot even be held accountable because nobody knows who they are".

Certification process

Explaining the selection procedure for a state-certified guide, Prema N, a certified guide for Bengaluru, said: "When applications are called for training,

Summer special trains from Bengaluru to Andhra Pradesh, Bihar & Kolkata

BENGALURU, DHNS: The railways will operate special trains connecting Bengaluru to Narasapur (Andhra Pradesh), Danapur and Katihar (Bihar), and Santragachi (Kolkata). Train number 07153 Narasapur-SMVT Bengaluru Weekly Express Special will run on Fridays, till May 29.

Train number 07154 SMVT Bengaluru-Narasapur Weekly Express Special will run on Saturdays, till May 30.

Train number 06579 will depart from Yeshwantpur at 7 am

on April 20 and reach Danapur (Patna) at 1.15 pm on Wednesday. Train number 06580 will depart from Danapur at 10.30 am on April 23 and reach Bengaluru Cantonment at 10 pm on Saturday.

Train number 06549 will

depart from SMVT Bengaluru at 11 pm on April 16 and April 23 and reach Danapur at 1.45 am on Sunday.

Train number 06550 will depart from Danapur at 8.15 am on April 20 and April 27 and arrive at SMVT Bengaluru at 11.15 am on Wednesday.

Train number 06571 Yeshwantpur-Katihar Weekly Special will run on Tuesdays, from April 17 to July 14.

Train number 06572 Katihar-Yeshwantpur Weekly Special will run on Fridays, till July 17.

Train number 06557 SMVT Bengaluru-Santragachi Weekly Express Special will run on Fridays, till April 24. Train number 06558 Santragachi-Bengaluru Cantonment Weekly Express Special will run on Sundays, till April 26.



Sri Siddaramaiah
Hon'ble Chief Minister
Govt. of Karnataka



Sri D.K. Shivakumar
Hon'ble Deputy Chief Minister
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- BESCOM Application No. (Optional for vacant Plots)
- Property Photo

*Rs. 125/- plus online Rs. 45+115=Rs. 160/- for eKhata at Home Visit (Janasevaka)

Chief Commissioner
Greater Bengaluru Authority

eKhata Citizen Helpline: 94806 83695



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STUDY @ KAHER (KLE) ALL INDIA ENTRANCE TEST (AIET) 2026-27 for the following Programs

ONLINE PROCTORED ENTRANCE TEST	Date: Sunday, 10th May 2026, Time: 11.00 AM to 01.00 PM
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Last date for submission of online application: Thursday, 30th April 2026, 04.00 PM

PHARMACY	NURSING SCIENCE	PHYSIOTHERAPY
• B.Pharm. • Pharm.D. @ Belagavi, Hubballi, Bengaluru	• B.Sc. Nursing @ Belagavi	• B. Physiotherapy @ Belagavi & Hubballi

B.Sc./Bachelor of Allied Health Science Programs @ Belagavi

• Bachelor of Medical Laboratory Science • Bachelor of Medical Radiology and Imaging Technology • Bachelor of Anaesthesia and Operation Theatre Technology • Bachelor of Dialysis Therapy Technology • Bachelor of Emergency Medicine Technologist • Bachelor of Respiratory Technology • Bachelor of Radiation Therapy Technology • Bachelor of Nutrition and Dietetics (Honors) • Bachelor of Optometry	• B.Sc. Cardiac Care Technology • B.Sc. Perfusion Technology • B.Sc. Neuro-Science Technology • B.Sc. Critical Care Technology • B.Sc. Endoscopy Technology • B.Sc. Health Informatics • B.Sc Forensic Science Technology • B.Sc Health Information Management
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OFFLINE ENTRANCE TEST for MASTER OF PHYSIOTHERAPY(MPT) SATURDAY, 9th May 2026 @ Belagavi	Last date for submission of online application: Thursday, 30th April 2026
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Admissions through: INTER-SE MERIT INTERVIEW

AYURVEDA • Diploma in Pharmacy (Ayurveda) @ Belagavi	PHARMACY • Diploma in Pharmacy @ Belagavi, Hubballi, Bengaluru
NURSING SCIENCE • P.B.B.Sc. Nursing @ Belagavi	PHYSIOTHERAPY B. Occupational Therapy @ Belagavi B. Prosthetics & Orthotic @ Belagavi

#WALK IN ADMISSIONS

Eligibility: XII - ARTS, SCIENCE, COMMERCE

• B.Sc. Hotel Management & Catering Technology • B.Sc Biostatistics and Demography • Bachelor of Hospital Administration • Bachelor of Fine Arts (Hindustani Classical Music- Vocal)	• Bachelor of Public Health
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*** Admissions based on: NATIONAL ELIGIBILITY CUM ENTRANCE TEST (NEET-2026)**

MEDICAL-MBBS	DENTAL-BDS	AYURVEDA & HOMOEOPATHY
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* Admission to the Medical/Dental/Ayush courses will be on the basis of the Rank obtained in the National Eligibility cum Entrance Test (NEET) & counselling/ allotment of seats by (MCC). * Directorate General of Health Sciences (DGHS) / Ayush Admissions Central Counseling Committee (AACCC), New Delhi

Contact No : 0831-2444 444 For further details please visit our website: www.kaher.edu.in

MEDICAL | DENTAL | PHARMACY | AYURVEDA | NURSING | PHYSIOTHERAPY | HOMOEOPATHY



Five achievers nominated for Ambedkar Award

BENGALURU, DHHS: Five achievers from different parts of the state have been nominated for the DrBR Ambedkar Award 2026.

The awardees are Mangaluru Vijaya from Bengaluru (Central) for struggles/ literature, C M Muniyappa from Bengaluru for struggles/journalism,

HN Annaiah from Mysuru for struggles, Hanumantharao Doddamani from Kalaburagi for literature and organisation and Shobha Gasti from Belagavi for the eradication of the Devadasi system.

The awards will be presented on Ambedkar Jayanti on Tuesday.

The playful audacity of Asha Bhosle

Asha Bhosle, from Page 1

Asha's breakthrough came with O P Nayyar, who openly preferred her over Lata. Their collaboration produced some of her most memorable early hits: the sultry '*Aaiye meherbaan*' (Howrah Bridge, 1958), and the lilting '*Deewana hua badal*'. Nayyar's Latin-inflected rhythms suited Asha's lively expression. '*Jaaiye aapa kahanjaayenge*' (Mere Sanam, 1965) is perhaps the crown jewel of their collaborative work.

Her later partnership with R D Burman—whom she married after a long personal and professional association—pushed her boundaries further. Together they brought pop energy and dramatic flourishes into film songs.

The pulsating *Aaja aaja* from Teesri Manzil (1966) remains an evergreen favourite: in it, Asha's exaggerated breathing becomes its unforgettable hook.

Asha's most famous songs now represent the rebellious girls of another era, and that is how we continue to hear the cabaret classic *Piya tu ab to aaja* (Caravan, 1971), the psychedelic *Dum maaro dum* (Hare Rama Hare Krishna, 1971), the charming '*Chura liya hai tumne jo dil ko*' (Yaadon Ki Baarati, 1973), and songs millennial have enjoyed on the big screen—'*Tanha tanha*' and '*Hai Rama yeh kya hua*' from Rangeela (1995). Asha was 62 when she sang these youthful songs for A R Rahman.

Not many can know the full extent of her versatility.

Her 1996 album Legacy with Ustad Ali Akbar Khan showcased her effortless command of classical ragas, drawing on the training she had received from her father. She handled ancient bandishes and taranas with the same ease she brought to her dance numbers.

Ghazal maestro Ghulam Ali gave her some of her most complex tunes; on their joint album Meraj-e-Ghazal, Asha matched his intricate improvisations unerringly, proving yet again that her music, often massy, could switch to being classy without missing a note.

Any list of the greatest Indian film songs is sure to feature Asha's solos, as also her duets with other stalwarts. Although she sang with Mukesh, Manna Dey, and Talat Mehmood, she was paired more often with Kishore Kumar and Mohammed Rafi.

Asha overcame personal hardship—an early, unhappy marriage to Ganpatrao Bhosle ended in separation. She raised three children, travelled the world for her live shows, and ran a chain of restaurants in West Asia and the UK. She was recording well into her last years.

A record book ranks Asha as the world's most recorded artiste. Her stupendous achievements—about 12,000 songs in some 20 languages including Kannada—place her among the world's most loved and celebrated singers. Her songs—naughty, theatrical, defiant—will play on for a long time to come.

(The author is a music buff)

After Rs 2k-cr windfall, BDA set for third e-auction of bulk land

BDA, from Page 1

Many of these sites were carved out of land reclaimed from encroachers or secured through court rulings.

In a recent notification issued by the BDA, the sites up for grabs are located in some of Bengaluru's prime neighbourhoods, including RMV 2nd Stage, Banashankari 6th Stage, Chandra Layout, Sir M Vishweshwaraiah Layout and Arkavati Layout.

The largest plot—spanning 4,593 square metres—is in HBR 1st Stage, while the smallest, at 403 square metres, is in places like Lingadheeranahalli and Herohalli.

Rates range from Rs 63,000 per sq metre to Rs 1.65 lakh based on locations.

The inaugural auction set a stunning benchmark as the BDA earned a whopping Rs 2,097 crore by selling 52 acres in Konadasapura, off Old Madras Road. The response prompted the agency to return to the market for a second and now a third round.

The latest notification, is-

sued under the BDA's Disposal of Corner Sites and Commercial Sites Rules, 1984, will open for live bidding on May 6, 2026. Interested parties must register by May 5.

A BDA official noted that bulk land auctions are designed to address Bengaluru's land scarcity by encouraging multi-dwelling unit development.

"Instead of carving out sites that will help fewer people, auctioning bulk land will lead to efficient land use as one can build more houses on an acre of land," the official said. He also noted that the proceeds would be used for critical infrastructure upgrades.

Despite the agency's confidence, the auction is not without controversy. Critics point out that several of these "commercial" sites are located within residential layouts.

"The BDA does not have the power to deviate from the layout development scheme and earmark bulk land for sale unless the government passes suitable amendments," a well-placed source said.

India rejects China's 'fictitious' renaming of places in Arunachal

Says such attempts won't alter undeniable reality

NEW DELHI, PTI

India on Sunday said China's move to assign "fictitious names" to Indian territory to manufacture "baseless narratives" cannot alter the reality but could impact ongoing efforts to normalise bilateral ties.

External Affairs Ministry spokesperson Randhir Jaiswal said New Delhi "categorically rejects" any "mischievous attempts" by the Chinese side to assign such names to places which form part of the Indian territory.

India had reacted sharply when China resorted to

renaming certain places in Arunachal Pradesh in May last year as well as in April 2024.

"India categorically rejects any mischievous attempts by the Chinese side to assign fictitious names to places which form part of the territory of India," Jaiswal said.

"Such attempts by China at introducing false claims and manufacturing baseless narratives cannot alter the undeniable reality that these places and territories, including Arunachal Pradesh, were, are, and will always remain an integral and inalienable part of India," he said.

Jaiswal said these actions by the Chinese side "detract from ongoing efforts to stabilise and normalise India-China bilateral ties".

"China should refrain from actions which inject negativity into relations and undermine efforts to create a better understanding," he said.

Jaiswal was responding to a media query on the issue.

The relations between the two countries witnessed a major downturn following the 2020 eastern Ladakh border row. In the last one-and-a-half years, the two sides have initiated a series of measures to

rebuild the relations.

In a fresh list released recently, China has renamed certain places in the Indian territory.

The Chinese Civil Affairs Ministry released the first list of the standardised names of six places in Zangnan in 2017, while the second list of 15 places was issued in 2021, followed by another list with names for 11 places in 2023.

Zangan is the Chinese name for Arunachal Pradesh.

China claims Arunachal Pradesh as part of southern Tibet.

DEITIES' DAY OUT



Deities' from Halasuru and Indiranagar are taken in a procession as part of 'Hoovina Pallakki Utsava' (flower palanquin fair), in Bengaluru on Sunday. DH PHOTO/M S MANJUNATH

◆ WEATHER ◆

Overview : Rainfall occurred at one or two places over Coastal Karnataka and South Interior Karnataka.

Forecast April 13: Mainly clear sky becoming partly cloudy sky towards afternoon/evening.

INTERIOR NORTH				
Stations	Max	Min	Rain	
Belagavi	36.4	23.0	0.0	
Bidar	38.2	22.0	0.0	
Vijayapura	39.5	26.0	0.0	
Dharwad	37.2	21.0	0.0	
Haveri	36.2	23.4	0.0	
Kalaburagi	41.6	28.1	0.0	
Raichur	39.4	26.0	0.0	
COASTAL				
Honnavar	33.4	24.2	0.0	
Karwar	35.2	26.0	0.0	
Shirali	NA	NA	NA	
Mangaluru	34.5	26.4	tr	

INTERIOR SOUTH				
Stations	Max	Min	Rain	
Agumbe	32.1	19.8	0.0	
Bengaluru	34.8	24.0	0.0	
Ballari	NA	NA	NA	
Chamarajanagar	--	--	--	
Chikmagalur	--	--	--	
Chitradurga	36.9	24.0	0.0	
Davangere	36.5	22.5	0.0	
Hassan	34.0	14.9	0.0	
Mysuru	36.0	20.4	0.0	
Madikeri	--	--	--	
Kolar	35.4	19.8	0.0	

OTHER STATIONS				
New Delhi	34.0	22.0	NIL	
Kolkata	36.0	26.0	NIL	
Mumbai	31.0	26.0	NA	
Chennai	33.0	26.0	NA	
Pune	38.0	22.0	NA	
Hyderabad	38.0	27.0	NA	
Thirupuram	31.0	27.0	NIL	

Yoga can reduce gaming addiction, says study

Gaming addiction, From Page 1

The Nimhans study involved 120 participants of the age group 14-15, who demonstrated symptoms of IGD.

They were divided into two groups of 60 each. While one group attended 24 sessions of yoga intervention over eight weeks, the other group was involved in more conventional activities like sports and crafts.

The groups were then studied based on seven globally recognised scales, including the Internet Gaming Disorder Scale, the WHO

Quality of Life, Mind Wandering and the UCLA loneliness scale. The findings demonstrated that adolescents who participated in the yoga intervention exhibited significantly greater reductions over time, relative to the control group, across all core IGD symptoms.

"With the internet becoming more accessible, free games and social media boom, gaming addiction has become more rampant. It acts like any other substance abuse addiction. Once the addiction sets in, the body's stress system is always running in overdrive. Gaming

keeps triggering the fight-or-flight response—stress, aggression, withdrawal," researcher Nagalakshmi told DH.

The researcher highlighted that the addiction was found to be more prevalent in males, with first-person shooter games like PUBG remaining the most popular. The addiction usually starts with stress, quickly transforming into anxiety and finally depression. "Yoga does the exact opposite. It brings the body back to calm from stress," Nagalakshmi added.

The yoga intervention was designed for screen-addicted

teenagers, starting with exercises for the wrists, fingers, neck and eyes, the body parts that gaming quietly impacts.

Subsequently, joint-loosening exercises were replaced with Suryanamaskara, Veerabhadrasana, and Vrukshasana, especially to rebuild focus and attention that gaming quietly erodes. "For oxygenation of the brain, we included Ushtrasana. For the spine, Setubandhasana and Poornanavasana. We wanted to

address every part of the body, not just the mind," Nagalakshmi said.

Globally, IGD affects roughly 10% of adolescents. In India, estimates range from 3.5% to 10% overall, with prevalence among boys reaching as high as 15%. While Cognitive behavioural therapy remains the clinical gold standard for IGD, yoga intervention can certainly be of help. Hence, the routers can stay plugged in for now.

KALABURAGI-BIDAR & YADGIR CO-OPERATIVE MILK PRODUCERS SOCIETIES' UNION LTD HUMNABAD RING ROAD KALABURGI-585104.
Phone: 08472-278758, Fax:08472-257620/273609, Mobile No-9448414264
e-mail :mdgumul@gmail.com & gumulpurchase@gmail.com

IFT No:Gumul/ Mega dairy/Tender-03/2026-27/45 Date.: 10.04.2026

TENDER NOTIFICATION

(KPP Portal Only)

The Kalaburagi-Bidar and Yadagir District Co-Operative Producer's Societies Milk Union Limited, Kalaburagi invites tenders from eligible tenderers for the following work on turnkey basis.

Sl.No.	Description of Material.	Qty	EMD
1.	Design, Supply, Installation and Commissioning of 100000 LPD Milk Processing Unit, with By-Product Processing Unit and Civil Work on Turnkey basis	01 job on turnkey basis	65,00,000

The tenderers may submit tenders for any or all of the items/ goods given above. Tenderers are advised to note the qualification criteria specified in Section VII to qualify for award of the contract.

Tender documents may be downloaded from e-procurement. website https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in/. Interested tenderers may obtain further information at the same address. The GUMUL will not be held responsible for the website problems if any, last date submission or non-receipt of the same.

Tenders must be accompanied by security of the amount specified in the tender document, drawn in favor of e-procurement government of Karnataka. Earnest money deposit will have to be in any one of the forms as specified in the tender document and shall have to be valid for **45 days** beyond the validity of the tender i.e. total for **135 days**.

Access to E-tender Documents	11.04.2026
Date and time of Pre-Bid meeting	21.04.2026, 12:30 PM
Last Date and Time for Submission of tender	09.05.2026 5.30 PM
Date & Time for Opening of Technical Bid	11.05.2026 11:30 AM onwards
Date & Time for Opening of Financial Bid	13.05.2026 11:30 AM onwards
Place of Opening of Technical and Financial Bid	Administrative Building, Kalaburagi Bidar and Yadagir Milk Union Limited, Humanabad Road, Kalaburagi-585104

Other details can be seen in the tender documents.

Sd/-
Managing Director.
Kalaburagi-Bidar & Yadgir Milk Union.,Ltd

SC to hear pleas on West Bengal SIR today

NEW DELHI, PTI: The Supreme Court is scheduled to hear on Monday a batch of pleas pertaining to the Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of electoral rolls in poll-bound West Bengal.

As per the apex court's cause list of April 13, the pleas would be heard by a bench comprising Chief Justice Surya Kant and Justice Joymalya Bagchi.

On April 10, the top court had agreed to hear on April 13 a fresh plea along with pending ones challenging the freezing of electoral rolls by the Election Commission ahead of the upcoming assembly polls in West Bengal.

The poll panel has frozen and finalised the electoral rolls on April 9 for the Assembly seats which are going to polls in the first stage.

Assembly elections in the state will be held in two phases on April 23 and 29, and votes will be counted on May 4.

The freezing of electoral rolls means that no new person, who has been deleted, can be added to the voter's list for this Assembly polls.

On Monday, the bench would also hear the suo motu case related to the 'gherao' of seven judicial officers engaged in the SIR exercise in West Bengal's Malda district.



2-phase Assembly polls scheduled from April 23

While hearing the matter on April 6, the top court ordered the National Investigation Agency (NIA) to take over cases related to the 'gherao' of seven judicial officers in Malda, observing that the bureaucracy's credibility was being lowered and politics was being injected into the West Bengal secretariat and government offices.

The apex court had exercised its plenary power under Article 142 of the Constitution to transfer around 12 cases related to the April 1 incident, as rioting is not a scheduled offence under the NIA Act.

On April 6, the bench noted that around 60 lakh claims and objections of those removed from voters' lists in the SIR in West Bengal have been decided.

It had asked the Chief Justice of the Calcutta High Court to constitute a three-member panel of former senior judges to frame uniform procedures for 19 tribunals for deciding appeals against deletions from the electoral rolls.

North Western Karnataka Road Transport Corporation
Dharwad Rural Division Dharwad.

Notice Inviting E-Tender No: 02/2026.
Through E-Procurement

Applications are invited through E-Procurement for selection of Licences to the Stalls, at various bus stations & Cleaning contractor at pay and use systems at various bus Stations that come under the jurisdiction of Dharwad Division. Tender Documents can be downloaded through E-Procurement Website "kppp.karnataka.gov.in" till **03.05.2026 Time 17:00 Hrs.** The last date for submission of Online Application is **03.05.2026 up to 17:00 Hrs.** and Tender opening is on **05.05.2026 Time 11:00 Hrs.** The persons having DCS (Digital Signature Certificate) are eligible to participate in the tender. For more details bidders may contact the above Office through Mobile: 7760996271 (Divisional Traffic Officer) & 7760129545 ATM.

Notice Inviting Manual Tender No:02/2026.

Application are invited through manual tender selection of Licences to the Stalls, Advertising display through Hoardings and Glow sign boards at various bus stands that come under the Jurisdiction of Dharwad Division. Interested bidders can take application forms at the office of Divisional Controller, Dharwad Division Dharwad from **13.04.2026 at 12:00AM to 04.05.2026 up to 14:00 Hrs.** Manual Negotiation Tender opening date is on **05.05.2026 at 12:00 Hrs.** For more details bidders may contact the above Office through Mobile: 7760996271 (Divisional Traffic Officer) & 7760129545 (ATM).

Divisional Controller
DIPR/DWD/DISHA/50/2026-27 NWKRTC Dharwad Division, Dharwad.

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- * B.Com
- * B.P.II
- * B.Sc.
- * B.Sc.
- * B.C.A.
- * B.B.A.

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- Agri-business & Food Processing
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Rural Roots Global Heights

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Email:ksrdpruadmissions@gmail.com

Prof. Dr. Suresh V. Nadagoudar
Registrar & Vice Chancellor (Acting)

Over 4 lakh PNG connections provided since March: Centre

Surge in demand for 5-kg LPG as govt favours domestic supply

AJITH ATHRADY
NEW DELHI, DHNS

The Centre on Sunday announced that over 4,24,000 new piped natural gas (PNG) connections have been activated since March this year, even as more than 30,000 consumers surrendered their LPG cylinders to switch to the cleaner and more convenient piped fuel. More than 4.66 lakh customers registered for new PNG connections. The supply of smaller 5-kg LPG cylinders has been ramped up, and the rollout of PNG connections has also accelerated as part of the management of fuel availability amid disruptions triggered by the West Asia conflict. More than 13 lakh 5-kg free trade LPG cylinders have been sold since March 23, with dai-

ly sales rising above 1,00,000 units, as authorities expand access for migrant workers and low-income consumers, according to an official statement from the Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas. As against the sale of about 77,000 5-kg cylinders in pre-crisis February, daily sales have topped over 1 lakh in the last two to three weeks. The statement said domestic LPG supplies remain stable overall, with no reported stock-outs and over 52 lakh cylinders delivered on April 11. Online bookings account for about 98% of the demand, while delivery authentication systems now cover 93% of transactions to curb diversion. Commercial LPG availability has been restored to about 70% of pre-crisis levels, supported by targeted allocations.



Protest rally against the LPG supply disruptions, in Bhubaneswar. PTI

GAS OVERVIEW

- Over 13 lakh 5-kg cylinders sold since March; demand rising sharply
- 5-kg cylinder sales now exceed 1 lakh per day (up from 77,000 pre-crisis)
- 4.24 lakh new connections added; some users shifting from LPG
- Household LPG prioritised; commercial supply cut to 70%

Ludhiana handtool export units face labour, gas supply shortages

LUDHIANA, PTI: The West Asia crisis is affecting export-oriented manufacturing units here, with handtool companies facing challenges such as labour shortages, rising input costs, and inadequate gas supply, impacting production and potentially weighing on the country's exports. The other difficulties they are facing include high interest rates, container availability, an increase in shipping and air freight, and high insurance costs. The units are, however, hopeful that the ceasefire announced between the US and Iran for 15 days will lead to an end to the conflict, helping ease these challenges. The joint attack launched by the US and Israel on Iran on February 28 severely disrupted the country's exports to West Asia and pushed up shipping

freight, air transport prices and insurance costs. Disruptions in the movement of oil and gas from West Asia countries have also led to an increase in the prices of raw materials such as steel, plastic and rubber. "Units in Punjab are facing a labour shortage. Workers who had gone to their villages in Uttar Pradesh and Bihar for the Holi festival have not yet returned. Reverse migration is a major concern," said Federation of Indian Export Organisations (FIEO) President S C Ralhan, who also owns a handtool unit in the Ludhiana export cluster. Labourers are worried that they may face issues in getting LPG cylinders. Ralhan said the government should support companies in constructing housing for workers.



Pets help young Kashmiris overcome years of trauma

ZULFIKAR MAJID
SRINAGAR, DHNS

A decade ago, dogs in Kashmir were kept on chains and cats roamed largely unnoticed. Today, both are moving indoors—named, groomed, photographed and treated as family. A quiet but striking shift is underway in the Valley: pets are no longer just functional—they are companions. From college students adopting stray cats to young professionals buying pedigree dogs, Kashmir's changing relationship with animals is offering a revealing glimpse into how everyday life is evolving beyond years of conflict.

"Earlier, dogs stayed outside. Now, people ask about diet charts and behaviour," says a Srinagar-based veterinarian, who notes a steady rise in first-time pet owners over the past five years. "It's no longer about security. It's about companionship."

Changing lifestyle This transformation mirrors a broader, if understated, trend across urban India. Studies show pet ownership is rising, particularly among higher-income and urban households, reflecting

ANIMAL FRIENDS

- From chains and strays to indoor, family-like pet care in Kashmir
- More college students and young professionals adopting dogs and cats
- Pets increasingly seen as sources of comfort, routine and stability
- Growth of grooming, pet food and informal vet services—still uneven and evolving

changing lifestyles and attitudes. India is home to an estimated 25–30 million pet dogs, though ownership levels vary widely by region and class. But in Kashmir, the shift carries deeper social meaning. For a generation that grew up amid cycles of violence and uncertainty, pets offer a form of emotional anchoring. "When everything outside feels unpredictable, coming home to a pet gives you routine," says Bazila, a college student in Srinagar who adopted a stray cat during the pandemic. "You have to feed it, care for it—it gives your day a structure." Research increasingly supports this instinct, with

surveys across India showing a majority of pet owners reporting reduced stress and improved emotional well-being. **Social media influence** Social media has amplified the shift. On platforms like Instagram and YouTube, Kashmiri pet accounts have built small but growing audiences. These images normalise a lifestyle once seen as distant. The market is responding. Pet food stores, grooming services and informal veterinary networks have expanded, particularly in Srinagar. Yet, the ecosystem remains uneven, with many owners relying on word-of-mouth advice rather than formal training or veterinary guidance. "People buy breeds like huskies because they look good on social media," says one doctor. "But they don't always understand climate suitability or long-term care." Alongside the rise in pedigree pets, a quieter shift is visible: the adoption of strays. While still a small movement, it signals a gradual change. This pet boom may not make headlines in the way politics or conflict once did. Yet, it offers a rare, intimate glimpse into a society in transition.

Jaishankar meets UAE President

NEW DELHI, PTI: External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar on Sunday met President of the United Arab Emirates Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan and discussed the West Asia crisis and its economic impact. Jaishankar was on a two-day visit to the Gulf nation from Saturday. "Conveyed warm greetings of Prime Minister @narendramodi and our gratitude for ensuring well-being of the Indian community during the West Asia conflict," the external affairs minister said on social media after the meeting in Abu Dhabi. Jaishankar also said he thanked Al Nahyan for his guidance on further strengthening the India-UAE comprehensive strategic partnership. It is understood that the Dubai Crown Prince and Deputy Prime Minister of the UAE, Hamdan bin Mohammed Al Maktoum, was also present during Jaishankar's meeting with the UAE president.

NIA detains 7, including Cong candidate, in Malda gherao case

KOLKATA, PTI: The NIA on Sunday detained seven people, including a Congress candidate for the West Bengal polls, and arrested a panchayat member of the ISF over the gherao of judicial officers by locals in Malda protesting the deletion of names in the SIR exercise, an officer said. According to an official, the Congress's Mothabari candidate, Sayem Chowdhury, was picked up along with some of his associates while he was campaigning for the polls in the Alinagar panchayat area. The NIA has been tasked by the Election Commission to probe into the April 1 gherao incident, following a direc-

tive from the Supreme Court, which has censured the West Bengal administration over the issue. "According to preliminary information, ISF's gram panchayat member Golam Rabbani was arrested based on leads obtained during the interrogation of Mofakkarul Islam, an AIMIM member, who had earlier been held by the state police," the official said. NIA sources said Rabbani is likely to be brought to Kolkata and produced before a court. "Our officials believe that interrogating him would yield crucial information related to the incident," he said.

Kerala CPM defends 'minor' girl's marriage

ARJUN RAGHUNATH
THIRUVANANTHAPURAM, DHNS

CPM leaders in Kerala, who are likely to be in the dock over the marriage of the Kumbh Mela viral girl, are defending their stand, reiterating that the girl was not a minor at the time of marriage. The state police is also maintaining that the Aadhaar card produced by the girl was found to be genuine and she had attained the age of 18 at the time of her marriage on March 11. A finding of the National Commission for Scheduled Tribes—which pointed out that as per hospital records, the girl did not attain the age of 18—has put the Kerala police as well as CPM leaders and authorities who helped her marry her lover against the wish of her parents in a spot. While CPM leaders had highlighted the inter-faith marriage as the 'real Kerala story', various Hindu organisations had alleged that it was an instance of 'love jihad' and criticised CPM for supporting it. CPM state secretary M V Govindan told reporters on Sunday that as per records produced by the girl's father, she was not a minor. Hence, the party supported the marriage. Govindan as well as state general education minister

and CPM leader V Sivankutty and CPM Rajya Sabha MP A A Rahim attended the wedding held at a temple at Arumanoor on the suburbs of Kerala on March 11. The Kerala police is also maintaining that as per the Aadhaar card of the girl, her date of birth is January 1, 2008, and hence, she turned 18 in March 2026, and legally eligible to take a decision. The MP girl, who went viral during the 2025 Maha Kumbh Mela, where she was selling fancy ornaments, came to Kerala for a film shooting. On March 11, she and Farman Khan approached the city police and said that her father was trying to forcefully take her back to their native place Madhya Pradesh. Subsequently, the two got married. However, the National Commission for Scheduled Tribes found that the girl was born on December 30, 2009, as per hospital records and is still a minor. The commission also sought a report from Kerala police. The Madhya Pradesh police also registered a case under sections of the PcoSo Act against Farman Khan. Various outfits have now demanded that the CPM leaders, who facilitated the marriage, should also be booked under relevant sections of the PcoSo Act.

Nari Shakti Vandan Sammelan

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A new dawn for Moon exploration

The return of four NASA astronauts who flew the Artemis-II mission marks the dawn of a new era in human exploration of the Moon, not driven by Cold War rivalries but by a scientific challenge to put boots on the cold and rocky satellite. The Artemis programme is the first step for humanity to peer into deep space from a lunar base. The mission has advanced the readiness for a sustained human presence beyond Earth. The next two Artemis missions, planned up to 2028, will involve testing more technologies and finally the lunar landing of a human crew. Subsequently, NASA plans one Artemis mission each year with the aim of setting up a permanent lunar base.

The Artemis-II mission was about rigorously testing the Orion spacecraft and its life-support, communication, and control systems in real conditions. The use of a free-return trajectory, the far-side lunar flyby, the slingshot orbit powered by gravity, and the carefully executed scientific observations during the communication blackout demonstrate the precision of modern space engineering and the resilience of human exploration. The riskiest part was re-entry into the Earth's atmosphere, due to concerns about Orion's heat shield from the experience of the 2022 uncrewed mission. As the Integrity crew capsule for the Artemis-II mission was already built by the time NASA learned about the problems associated with the heatshield material, the space agency modified the re-entry path to minimise the risks to the astronauts. The biggest joy was the moment when Commander Reid Wiseman's voice was heard at the mission control after a nerve-wracking six-minute blackout, when the capsule took a fiery plunge into the Earth's atmosphere, exposing it to a temperature of 2,760 degrees Celsius. For future missions, NASA will improve the designs of the heat shield, and will test at least one — or both — commercial landers from SpaceX and Blue Origin before it prepares for a descent in the Artemis-III mission, scheduled for 2028.

India is a signatory to the Artemis Accord that guides civil exploration of outer space, but is not part of NASA's Artemis programme. New Delhi has its own plans: Gagan-yaan, Bharatiya Antriksh station, and having an Indian on the Moon by 2040. All of these involve challenging science and critical engineering. Failures are natural in such a complex technological journey. It would be better if the Indian Space Research Organisation were transparent about its failures, rather than obfuscating them. Becoming open about failures can not only prepare people about the risks, but also allow a wider group of scientists to look for out-of-the-box solutions to complex problems.

The Artemis programme is the first step for humanity to peer into deep space from a lunar base

Voter rolls shrink, poll percentages rise

The Assembly elections in Kerala, Assam, and Puducherry, held last Thursday, recorded a high voter turnout, indicating strong voter interest in the democratic process. Kerala, which has always been known for high voter participation in elections, recorded a voter turnout of 78.27%, 4% higher than the 74.06% recorded in the 2021 polls. Puducherry witnessed a turnout of 89.87%, the highest in its electoral history. Assam also saw a historically high turnout of over 85%. The reasons for the increase in turnout and its impact on the outcome of the elections are being analysed and debated. But interpreting mandates in terms of the voter turnout in elections does not always give the right conclusions. The commonly mentioned idea that a high voter turnout is an indicator of the existence of an anti-incumbency wave has been disproved many times.

While the political reasons for the high turnout are difficult to state, it wouldn't be wrong to propose that the Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of electoral rolls had a role in pushing up the rate. The SIR process reduced the number of voters in Kerala and Puducherry by 3.2% and 7.5%, respectively, through the elimination of deceased voters, duplicate entries, and individuals who failed to submit enumeration forms. Also, the smaller size of the electorate accounted for a higher percentage of turnout. Puducherry, which saw a higher percentage of voters removed, saw a greater increase in voting percentage than in Kerala. The higher voter turnout was not accompanied by an increase in the absolute number of votes polled in many constituencies in Kerala. The SIR in Assam was not as stringent as in the other two states because of the special conditions related to immigration and citizenship claims that exist in the state. Its voters' list saw only a 1% reduction in names, but the state saw a significant jump in turnout.

One reason for the high turnout may be the keenness of the electors to register their votes in view of the SIR process, which has eliminated many names. Large numbers of migrant workers from Assam are known to have travelled to the state to vote. Many Kerala voters who live in the Gulf countries were unable to travel home to vote, because of the disruption in air traffic caused by the US-Israel war on Iran. All political parties and contending alliances in the fray have claimed victory, interpreting the figures in their own interest. They will have to wait till May 4 for validation of their claims. But the high voter participation confirms the strength of democracy.

High turnout defies simplistic anti-incumbency interpretations, complicating political spin

When the State imposes identities on people, like in the case of SIR and transgender bill, the system becomes authoritarian

A V S NAMBOODIRI

What is the common idea that runs through the Citizenship Amendment Act (CAA) of 2019, the Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of voters' list and the Transgender Persons (Protection of Rights) Amendment Bill, 2026, passed by Parliament? The line that runs through these national legislations and the Gujarat Registration of Marriages Act, 2006, and the move by some temple committees in Uttarakhand to verify the Hindu identities of pilgrims through a test is the same. That idea is this: The identities of a citizen and a voter, and gender, religious and marital status are not claimed and carried by individuals of their free will but are imposed on them by the State or other agencies after tests and verification.

In a democracy, the individual decides who one is and has control over one's identity. In an authoritarian society, the State decides who a person is, and prescribes the processes to decide and recognise the person's identity.

The CAA was passed in 2019 and its rules have been framed. It provides for grant of citizenship to non-Muslim refugees from Pakistan, Bangladesh, and Afghanistan, and excludes Muslims from these countries and Tamils from Sri Lanka.

Apart from being unequal and discriminatory, it avoids the constitutional process for citizenship and creates its own process to award it to persons from selected groups. It introduces a religious test for citizenship. With the National Register of Citizens (NRC), which the government plans to implement nationwide, it will decide the citizen status of people. Those whose names do not appear in the NRC will not qualify to be citizens. The government, which will prepare the NRC, will decide who the citizen is.

The NRC process, when it takes place, may not be very different from the SIR process conducted by the Election Commission of India in some states and still underway in others. A person's citizenship and status as a voter are involved in the SIR process.

Those who have lived in the country for generations have been told to explain and prove their belonging, and the State, effectively through the Election Commission, will accept or reject the explanation and the proof. The voter's identity will

have to be proved and recognised. The voter status of millions of people has been questioned and lakhs excluded in West Bengal. The problem is not just with the procedure of the SIR but with its design, validity and legitimacy.

The Election Commission's power to conduct citizenship verification is not clear, and the way it is doing voter verification has raised questions about fairness, accuracy and impartiality.

From choice to control

The identity issue has taken a sharper turn with the transgender legislation, enacted last month. The idea that gen-



der identity is a personal choice and self-determined by an individual has been well accepted in democratic societies. The Supreme Court recognised this principle in the *NALSA* judgment in 2014. It has its basis in the right to privacy and other rights. But the amendment has changed this idea. Identity is no longer self-defined and what you think is true about yourself. It is what the State verifies and certifies.

The Bill says an individual's declaration of identity must go through a verification process by a medical board. The State, through the board and the administration, will decide the identity, whatever the individual may think it is. It will not be a lived and experienced reality but a condition, verified, recognised and controlled by the State. While the social identity may be fluid and may evolve, the legal identity becomes rigid.

The State's movement into the realm of personal identity is also evident in the amended Gujarat Registration of Marriages Act, which mandates that intending couples share details about their parents and declare that they have told their parents about the marriage. That gives the State a decisive say in the citizen's marital status and makes it dependent on external consent. No one can any longer consider marriage as a matter between two individuals.

The committee that manages the pil-

grim centre Gangotri in Uttarakhand has proposed the consumption of *panch-gavya*, made of cow milk, curd, ghee, urine and dung, mandatory for all those who wish to enter the temple. It is a test to prove the person is a Hindu and adheres to '*sanatan dharma*'. This is an external test of religious identity, which should normally be a matter of self-declaration. A committee is now doing the declaration and certifying that the person is a Hindu. But shouldn't I have the right to declare my religious identity?

It is true that it is not the government or a government agency that conducts the test, but such proposals pass the government muster in Uttarakhand. Uttarakhand is known to be a testing ground for future ideas and practices.

Citizenship defines political and civic existence and personal identity. It links the individual to the State, but is not an attribute dependent on the State. In India, it has always been inclusive, encompassing all racial, religious and other categories.

But the certainty about citizenship is weakening now and it is being seen in exclusive terms, as the CAA shows. That is the case with the voter identity, too. When citizenship and voter identity are tested and verified, they become conditional and tentative. The State takes control of them.

The nature of gender, marital status and religious affiliation is more personal, and does not link individuals to the State the way citizenship and voter identity do. They are expressions of personal autonomy, and individuals should have control over them.

India has had a rights-based democratic order in which individuals defined themselves as citizens and voters, and expressed their other identities in ways they thought right about themselves — men, women or trans, husband, wife, friend or partner, Hindu, Muslim or Christian. When the State or any external agency makes these decisions for individuals, the system becomes authoritarian. The State intrudes into the personal space of citizens.

One basic difference between democracy and authoritarianism is that in a democracy the people decide the nature of the State and control it, while in an authoritarian system the State decides the nature of the people and controls them.

The Constitution gives wide scope for individuals to make their choices, define themselves and assert their identity in all areas that cover the CAA and NRC, the SIR process, the transgender's rights, the marriage bill and the testing of religious identity. But the Supreme Court has not yet ruled on the constitutional status of the CAA and the SIR. Other issues are yet to reach the court.

(The writer is a former associate editor and editorial advisor of Deccan Herald)

RIGHT IN THE MIDDLE

The quiet transformation

The chairs remained unoccupied until I realised life must go on

KISHORE S RAO

As we grew older, we found the simple pleasures in life could be so rewarding. We would take a gentle walk around the walking path, going only as fast as she could walk, and soon she would sit in a chair by the side of the track, and I would continue, at a brisker pace, to finish my thirty minutes of walking.

After some time the children playing in the garden would begin to come and speak to her, at first very tentatively, and later there would be an inconsequential conversation going between the old lady and the children. Often the children appeared to seek a reason to spend time with her, sometimes beginning with a question like, "Have you seen my Mamma?"

In time, adults also would stop by and have a short conversation before continuing their walk. This was the beginning of a small community — the old lady, the children, the adults and I, who would have finished my walk and joined her. As more people joined the group, she began to get to know them all by name, and each conversation began to be a small interlude before they continued their play or walk. The children and the adult walkers had a common purpose of either playing or walking around the walking track, but she soon got established as the kind old lady with a ready response. The transformation was almost imperceptible. She had always been friendly but shy. And here she was, a friend to young and old, known to all as being available for a short chat or a complaint from the children when they had a small quarrel with one of their friends.

She was always thin and, with age and illness, had become frail. One evening she became ill after dinner and had to be moved to hospital. It was just a short three days in the ICU, and one afternoon, around lunchtime, she quietly slipped away.

The chairs around the walking track

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Democracy falters in the SIR process

Apropos 'Battle for the ballot: How the SIR process shook WB' (Apr 12), it is disturbing to note the mayhem caused by the SIR exercise in West Bengal. It is equally disheartening that many poor and hapless people had to walk miles or travel by whatever means available to reach the tribunals to submit the documents to reinstate their deleted names in the voters' list. The ECI, having men, material and technology at its disposal, should conduct SIR

in a people-friendly manner. It should set up mobile tribunals, reach every nook and corner of the state, obtain the requisite documents and complete the reinstatement process on the spot. In a democracy, the government is "by the people, for the people and of the people", and it is they who make the kings. However, it is deplorable that the SIR has made their condition pathetic.

SS Kulkarni, Bengaluru

Doomed from the start

I refer to 'US, Iran hold face-to-face peace talks in Pakistan' (Apr 12). The failure of the talks brokered by Pakistan was a foregone conclusion, as the demands of the warring parties pre-empted any amicable settlement, not to mention Pakistan's own dubious credentials. The conflict, triggered by the imperialist motives of Donald Trump, must be condemned in the interest of world peace. The demand that Iran should not possess nuclear weapons is

unconscionable, as every State has the right to safeguard its territorial integrity. At the same time, Iran cannot hold neutral nations to ransom by blocking or sabotaging the Strait of Hormuz. It is hoped better sense prevails and the next round of talks yields positive results.

T V Pandarinath Naidu, Kudige

Confusion over tax

The new financial year has begun, and property tax has to be paid before the end of this month to avail

of a 5% rebate. But so far, there has been no notification from the newly formed GBA corporation on which wards different areas fall under or other such details. The authorities concerned must communicate the details to avoid further confusion and the need to go from one ward office to another.

Raghavendra Rao, Bengaluru

Our readers are welcome to email letters to: letters@deccanherald.co.in (only letters emailed — not handwritten — will be accepted). All letters must carry the sender's postal address and phone number.

SPEAK OUT

The BJP is planning to bring in a delimitation bill to divide West Bengal into three parts. It may merge parts of West Bengal with Bihar or Odisha, and torture Bengalis there... They (BJP) have struck a Rs 1,000-crore deal to unseat the TMC from power



in West Bengal.
Mamata Banerjee, West Bengal CM

Politics is essentially about the management of fear, an economy of fear, continually adjusting the level of fear to produce the right level of affect in the citizenry.

Simon Critchley

TO BE PRECISE



IN PERSPECTIVE

The burden of VIP culture

Public money squandered on pomp instead of welfare and nation-building

PAUL NEWMAN

In the United States, people are thronging the streets to support the 'No King' movement, aimed at sending a strong message to President Donald Trump regarding his high-handed behaviour and tendency to take citizens for granted. Indians, however, remain slow learners; we are yet to break free from the shackles of monarchy, and this is evident in the fact that many democratically elected members still belong to erstwhile royal families. Though we gave up monarchy eight decades ago, its modern form continues to be practised by politicians who persist in making claims of 'entitlements'.

A few weeks ago, it was a pleasant surprise to read that Karnataka's Director General of Police announced the discontinuation of the British system of appointing orderlies for senior police officers. He rightly described it as a colonial legacy and a continuation of entitlement culture that demeaned trained lower-rank police officials.

Following this came a hotly debated topic in the Assembly: the Chief Minister of Karnataka's frequent use of helicopters to reach even short destinations that could be accessed more quickly by road, given the infrastructural accessibility to helipads. The chief minister vehemently defended his actions, invoking the precedent of a past chief minister who had spent even more.

Politicians often claim they entered public service to serve the people. In reality, it is the average citizen's taxes that sustain their livelihoods. An MLA draws a basic salary of Rs 80,000, and upon retirement, is entitled to a pension of Rs 75,000. For attending Assembly proceedings and committee meetings, they receive daily allowances.

More recently, the conduct of elected representatives in the Karnataka Assembly was nothing short of shameful. Instead of debating matters of public interest, they lamented not receiving enough tickets to watch IPL matches. Cutting across party lines, many demanded free tickets and VIP recognition in a sports-entertainment arena — much like Roman senators luxuriating in the Colosseum while gladiators fought to their amusement.

Their privileges extend far beyond salaries. Phone bills are paid by the public, travel is free or reimbursed, and they are allotted government vehicles with police protection. They enjoy rent-free accommodations, hotel rooms with free gas, or housing allowances if they choose private residences. Secretarial assistance, free

stationery, VIP airport lounges, and medical treatment for themselves and their families are guaranteed. In serious cases, some have even been sent abroad for treatment — at public expense.

Many elected representatives have gone abroad on study trips to developed countries, but the output from these trips has been minimal, while civil conditions — especially in Bengaluru — have continued to worsen.

Public austerity is something today's politicians must learn from leaders of the past. The case of K Kamaraj, the former chief minister of erstwhile Madras State (now Tamil Nadu), who came down heavily on an official for extending a water line to his mother's house, is exemplary. The simple lives of Karnataka's former chief minister S Nijalingappa and politician T R Shamanna, popularly called 'Karnataka's Gandhi', are worthy of emulation.

The simplicity of politicians instils confidence in ordinary citizens that India remains a democracy despite its shortcomings. Public trust in politics, politicians, and institutions deteriorates when leaders indulge in pomp and VIP status, but it strengthens when they live like common citizens. Such humility gives people a sense of belonging and reassurance that the common man is still cared for.

Leading a normal life would enhance politicians' moral credibility as public servants, and demonstrate respect for taxpayers whose hard-earned money is otherwise squandered on someone else's luxury. Fleets of luxury cars, sprawling bungalows with costly maintenance, and unnecessary protocol expenses are hallmarks of monarchy and dictatorship — features that democracy can do without.

Savings from curbing VIP culture could contribute significantly to nation-building, particularly in improving the lives of the poor and addressing neglected causes such as education, healthcare, and social welfare, from which VIP funds are currently diverted.

Alongside dynastic politics, VIP culture is crippling India, and it is time for the VIP *raj* to end. Indian citizens deserve freedom from this culture of entitlement. Politicians must accept that they are not rulers but, by choice, public servants. If they want entertainment and privileges, they should bear the expenses rather than burdening the public. It is time for the State to play a proactive role in dismantling VIP culture. Doing so would lead to better governance, greater honesty, reduced corruption, an upsurge in patriotism and nationalistic feeling, and a renewed sense of inspiration among citizens who could once again look up to politicians as role models.

(The writer is a Professor and Dean of Humanities and Social Sciences, St. Joseph's University, Bengaluru)

Battleground Bengal: Can TMC’s women candidates blunt SIR deletions?

RAKHEE ROY TALUKDAR

In West Bengal, the Trinamool Congress, reeling under massive SIR deletions in these high-stakes elections, has continued its strategy of increasing the electoral representation of women, reinforcing its *Bangla Nijer Meye ke Chaaye* (Bengal wants its own daughter) narrative and centring this election on gender parity and Bengali sub-nationalism.

The TMC’s consistent focus on increasing women’s representation has become a potent weapon to counter the Opposition, which it claims indulges only in “tokenism”.

In 2026, the party is fielding 52 women candidates, around 18% of the total 291 seats it is contesting.

With higher turnouts and solid support as a distinctive bloc, women voters have been a key factor in the TMC’s massive victories in the past. The TMC views women

as its most “winnable” candidates, who the party believes strengthen its grassroots politics. In 2021, TMC secured 50% of the female vote.

Political analyst Romita Dutta told *DH*, “Women have rallied behind Mamata Banerjee because of her ability to play the gender card right. In 2021, she projected herself as Bengal’s daughter, trying to protect her state from a bunch of marauding outsiders. Later, when she injured herself and campaigned in a wheelchair, her image—that of a woman fighting alone against a muscle-flexing party—got stuck in women’s psyches. It helped her party garner 50% of women’s votes, 13% more than the Bharatiya Janata Party.”

One of Mamata’s major poll planks has been her women-centric welfare measures such as Lakshmi Bhandar, Kanyashree and Rupashree.

Dutta says, “Multiple studies show that women spend this money on medicines

and children’s education without having to borrow. BJP is also now talking of an enhanced monthly allowance.”

With its focus on marginalised communities, the TMC is fielding 25 women from the reserved seats. West Bengal has a total of 68 Scheduled Caste seats and 16 Scheduled Tribe seats. At least 20 of the 68 SC seats have been given to women, around 29.4%. Of the 16 ST seats, five—or 31%—have been given to women.

In Phansidewa (ST seat), the TMC has fielded Reena Toppo Ekka, who has worked in tea gardens; in Ranibandh (SC seat), Tanushree Hansda, who has worked for the uplift of Adivasis in Jangalmahal. The party says these choices reflect its faith in resilient women whose lives have been shaped by struggle.

This time, Mamata has also repeated at least 24 of her women MLAs, including herself, and dropping only nine. A tactical move, this ensures that her core female

legislative team remains intact, with minimal fallout. It is clear she does not want to upset the deep roots these leaders have developed within their constituencies.

Statistics show that TMC’s women candidates are likely winners, as they face lower anti-incumbency compared to men. They are also perceived as less corrupt and more socially acceptable.

In 2021, TMC fielded 50 women out of the 291 seats it contested; 33 won, many of them repeats, proving their electoral mettle.

TMC has consistently promoted women candidates at the parliamentary level too. In the 2024 Lok Sabha elections, 12 women were fielded out of 42 seats; 11 of them won, adding to TMC’s total of 29 seats. This was 28.5% of its candidates in the state.

In 2011, when TMC was fighting to end 34 years of CPM rule, it fielded 32 women, of whom 25 won. In 2016, it fielded 45

women, of whom 29 emerged victorious.

Tara Krishnaswamy, co-founder of Shakti, which works to ensure more political power for women, told *DH*, “TMC has significantly outdone all other parties. Mamata has gone up to 41% in the parliamentary elections and a significant percentage in the Assembly elections.”

She adds, “The way women vote is not based on a single factor, except under extraordinary circumstances. Welfare schemes cannot be one deciding factor, but as a package, they become important. The package offers political, human development, educational and health empowerment, and so on. She is trying to complete this package by offering women tickets.”

The BJP, although increasing its tally of tickets for women, has not been able to match TMC’s numbers.

In 2011, the party fielded 23 women with no wins. In 2016, it fielded 32, again with no winners. In 2021, it fielded 36 women,

of whom seven won.

In 2026, the BJP is fielding 44 women candidates. Prominent among them are Ratna Debnath, mother of the R G Kar victim, contesting from Panihati; Rekha Patra, the Sandeshkhali sexual assault survivor, from Hingalganj; and actress Roopa Ganguly from Sonarpur Dakshin. The party has also repeated six of its current MLAs.

The disparity between the two parties’ women-centric ticket distribution is not just about numbers but, experts say, about their intent. The entire TMC brand is built around Mamata, who says, “Consider me as your candidate in all the 294 seats,” urging voters to rally behind her leadership.

In contrast, the BJP’s leadership in West Bengal is predominantly male-centric. Without a high-profile woman leader at the top, the party is unable to project the same level of “organic” female leadership.

What are the implications if the administration of the world’s most powerful country is chaotic in its thinking and not reliably in touch with reality?

JONATHAN RAUCH AND PETER WEHNER

It has been clear for a long time that President Donald Trump is a person with a disorganised mind and a disordered personality. What the past few months and especially the past few weeks have brought into focus is how the president’s pathologies have cascaded downward and outward through his administration. They have become institutionalised. The reason the administration so often does not act coherently is because it cannot. The world faces something new and baffling and frightening in Trump’s second term: a psychotic State.

This does not mean that every individual in the government is emotionally or psychologically unstable. Nor is it a clinical diagnosis of the president himself. The issue is that the administration as a whole lacks a consistent attachment to reality and the ability to organise its thinking coherently. Trump’s grandiosity, his impulsivity, inconsistency and his outright breaks with reality have become State policy.

In that respect, Trump’s second term is different from his first. In 2020, he could confabulate about the election result or babble about treating Covid with injections of disinfectant. But he could not translate his fantasies into reality—at least not usually. In the second term, by contrast, institutional psychosis has been on display since Day 1.

It is the Iran war that has most vividly demonstrated the scope of the problem. In this conflict, the most potent antagonist has been the administration’s own incoherence.

The Trump administration chose to wage a war without deciding on its aims, mapping out a strategy, planning for contingencies or even being able to explain itself. The goal was regime change—until it wasn’t. The demand was unconditional surrender—until it wasn’t. Deadlines were issued and then erased. Threats of total destruction were made and then pulled back. Iran’s nuclear programme was a *casus belli* in February despite the fact that we were told by Trump that it had been “obliterated” last June. The president called for an international coalition to open the Strait of Hormuz, then said the United States could go it alone, and then said the waterway would somehow “open itself.” He claimed that the United States had already won the war, that the war would end soon, and that the war would end “when I feel it ... in my bones.” As a headline in *The Times* put it, the president’s position on Iran “can change by the sentence.”

Even as the bombs fell, the administration, concerned about gasoline prices, waived sanctions on some Iranian oil, “giving Iran’s war effort against the US a boost,” as *The Washington Post* reported. Area experts were shocked when the administration proved unprepared for Iran’s partial closing of the Strait of Hormuz, a tactic experts had anticipated for decades. The administration might have been readier had it not chopped back the State Department’s Middle East desk, got rid of its oil and gas experts and eliminated its dedicated Iran office. The administration handicapped its own National Security Council by firing staff members, some at the behest of a conspiracy-minded Internet personality, and undercutting its independence—not a good idea before launching a war. Trump’s social media



NYT

posts seemed self-contradictory and borderline demented.

Incoherence is not incidental in this administration; it is the administration’s *modus operandi*. The so-called Department of Government Efficiency caused chaos in federal agencies by sacking, and then sometimes rehiring, employees without any evident rationale—and without making a serious dent in government spending. Trump flipped from “no more wars” to waging war (in Iran) and using and threatening military force (Venezuela, Greenland, Cuba), seemingly every other month. The policy towards Ukraine was simultaneously supportive and not supportive. Tariffs went up and down and on and off, reflecting the president’s whims. In February, he bragged that gas prices were low, then in March that they were high. This is far from normal.

Normal administrations set up policy processes that assemble evidence from varied sources, collate viewpoints and priorities across multiple agencies and ensure rational deliberation before options reach the president. One of us served in three Republican administrations and participated as interagency reviews took place in a cabinet department, in an executive agency and in the White House itself. A single line in a presidential foreign policy statement might require the input of 20 or more people from the Defence Department, the State Department, the CIA, the Department of the Treasury and more.

The policy review process can be tortuous and sometimes mistaken. It can’t substitute for wise presidential judgment. But it is vital. It asks hard questions and assesses competing arguments. It ensures

expert input in specific domains, anticipates how policies may ramify and prepares for contingencies.

In all those ways, the systematic review of policy amounts to an institutional mind: a cognitive process that organises the government’s deliberations to keep them rational and anchored in reality. You might think of it as the government’s equivalent of the prefrontal cortex, the part of the brain responsible for high-level executive functions such as impulse control and long-term planning. In Trump’s second term, those functions still exist, but they can be disrupted, circumvented or just plain abandoned at any moment on the say-so of the president and his senior officials. In that respect, the Trump administration is mindless.

Policy judgments should be made by the president, not by subordinate agencies and experts. But irrational processes produce inexplicable outcomes, and that is what we have seen, again and again. The only rhyme or reason is the principle that Trump himself proclaimed when explaining his policy toward Cuba: “I think I can do anything I want with it.” That is the principle by which his administration governs.

When an agency goes haywire, the administration might rush to stabilise it—for example, at the Department of Homeland Security, where chaos and brutality led to the killing of two American citizens right on the street in Minneapolis. But until a coherent policy process is restored under a chief executive who understands the need for it, we should expect geysers of mindlessness to keep erupting in unforeseeable ways and places.

Understandably, scholars, journalists and politicians have attempted to fit Trump II into any number of at least somewhat rational frameworks: populism, isolationism, unilateralism, nationalism, transactionalism, the “madman” theory, spheres of influence, imperialism and more. Some of those frameworks can help illuminate the president and the people around him. As one of us has argued, Trump is a patrimonialist—a leader who believes the State is his personal property. And both of us have said that his administration displays hallmarks of fascism. Ultimately, however, institutional psychosis defies rational categories. Predicting this administration’s behaviour is impossible under any framework. And if the president becomes more desperate as he grows more unpopular, the danger only increases.

Which leaves everyone wondering: What are the implications if the administration of the world’s most powerful country is chaotic in its thinking, unpredictable in its actions and not reliably in touch with reality? It is impossible to know. America and its allies have dealt with a lot of presidential imperfections and failings, but there is no precedent, or even category, for the institutional psychosis displayed by the second Trump administration. Precisely because the psychotic State is so unpredictable, setting up systems to manage it will not work.

This puts the country and its allies in the precarious but not hopeless position of over-relying on the rational guardrails that remain. Some of these guardrails are within the executive branch: in the federal bureaucracies and the military services, where nodes of ordinary practice and process carry on as best they can. Still more important are guardrails in the other branches of government. The courts have remained independent and tethered to reality. Congress has quietly nixed some of Trump’s wildest nominees and overruled some of the administration’s destructive impulses, such as its attack on the science budget. State governments, especially in blue states, have been using the courts and their own policies to resist Trump’s agenda and demand accountable behaviour from Washington.

Perhaps most important, the public supports effective and responsive government, not the wild swings of a fugue State—and it is making its feelings known.

Institutional psychosis is ultimately self-defeating and unsustainable. Reality checks will return because reality always reasserts itself. But severe damage will have been done, damage that may take a generation or more to repair.

As the Trump era winds down, the country may relearn something that never should have been forgotten. Institutions need to be reformed, not destroyed; governing well requires skill and careful attention to detail rather than leaders acting on impulse and ignorance; and character and mental stability matter perhaps most of all.

The New York Times

Make banking work for senior citizens

ALEXANDER THOMAS

Over the years, I have met many senior citizens facing various challenges regarding their banks: a widower unsure of how to access his own savings after his spouse’s passing; a retired teacher who has not updated her bank nomination because the process feels confusing; an elderly couple who avoid going to the bank altogether because the physical effort is simply too much. These stories are just three among many, unfolding quietly but causing distress and anxiety in the lives of people who often hesitate to complain.

In response to these concerns, the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has taken thoughtful, comprehensive, and time-bound steps to improve the banking experience for senior citizens and their families. These initiatives deserve strong recognition and appreciation.

One of the most significant reforms is the standardisation of the deceased-claims framework. For far too long, families have had to deal with delays and inconsistent documentation requirements across banks during times of grief and sorrow. The RBI has now streamlined and standardised these processes across institutions, bringing clarity, predictability, and compassion into what is often a very difficult time. Importantly, banks were directed to implement these measures by March 31, ensuring that this remains not just policy intent but is implemented into practice.

Equally important is the strengthening of the nomination framework. The RBI has reiterated that banks must actively inform and encourage customers to register nominees, not only at the time of account opening but also throughout the lifecycle of the account. The move to enable digital nomination, modification and cancellation is particularly relevant today. This simple yet powerful intervention can prevent significant legal complications, delays and distress for families. The updated regulatory framework ensures that nomination is no longer treated as optional paperwork but as an essential element of responsible banking.

Another important and humane step is the expansion of doorstep banking services for senior citizens above 70 years of age, as well as for differently-abled and medically infirm individuals who require such support. Services such as cash delivery, pickup of instruments, submission of KYC documents, and collection

of life certificates can now be provided at the customer’s residence. This recognises a fundamental truth: for many elderly individuals, access is not about the availability of services but about the ability to physically reach them. By taking banking to their doorstep, the RBI has addressed a very real and often overlooked barrier.

These measures have been consolidated within the broader Responsible Business Conduct Directions, 2025, providing a structured and unified framework for banks to follow. The detailed guidelines are publicly available on the RBI website.

These RBI measures are a significant step forward, particularly as they reflect a regulator that is listening and responding. At the same time, it is important to note that awareness remains uneven across urban and rural settings, and many seniors are still unaware of their rights and available facilities. There is therefore a parallel need for sustained outreach, financial literacy and community-level engagement so that these well-intentioned reforms translate into real, everyday ease and dignity for older adults.

There are also other areas that require deeper attention. Ageing is not uniform. Many older adults live with frailty, chronic illness or declining memory. They are far from incapable, but they need support. India’s current banking frameworks still operate largely in binaries: either complete independence or none at all, via formal legal arrangements such as power of attorney. What is missing is the step in between: a structured way to enable assisted banking, where a trusted caregiver can support a senior citizen in a limited, safeguarded manner. Rather than diluting autonomy, this would enable it in a realistic and secure way.

There is also the question of implementation. Policies must translate into a consistent on-ground experience. Awareness among customers, clarity among bank staff and a culture of sensitivity are essential if these initiatives are to achieve their intended impact. The RBI has taken important and commendable steps. The opportunity now is to build on this foundation, with continued dialogue, refinement and collaboration.

(The writer is co-founder and governing board member, Vayah Vikas, which engages with senior citizens to bring forward lived experiences, highlight systemic gaps and advocate for practical, humane solutions)

OUR PAGES OF HISTORY

50 YEARS AGO: APRIL 1976

Creation of Pak against tenets of Islam: Ahmed

Bangalore, April 12
The creation of Pakistan was a mistake as Koran, the holy scripture of the Muslims, never did enjoin on them to have a separate habitat of their own, President Fakhruddin Ali Ahmed said here today. The mistake should not be repeated, he said and asked the Muslims to work for the development of the country as “Bharat Nagariks.” He was laying the foundation-stone of the Rs. 1.5-crore commercial complex in the premises of Hazarath Syed Hameed Shah Dargah.

25 YEARS AGO: APRIL 2001

Vajpayee extends \$200 m credit line to Iran

Tehran, April 12
In an initiative to stimulate growth of Indo-Iranian bilateral trade, Prime Minister A B Vajpayee today extended a US \$ 200 million credit line to Iran. Addressing a joint meeting of the Iranian Chamber of Commerce, Industry and Mines (ICCIM) and the FICCI on the concluding day of his Tehran leg of the visit here today, he identified five specific areas in which the two sides can lay focus to boost bilateral economic interaction.

OASIS | SUDHA UMASHANKER

Why seeking forgiveness is a struggle

The one word that can repair a relationship when a harsh word has been uttered or a precious object broken, a project ruined or a charge made wrongfully is ‘sorry’. Yet this is so difficult to utter for most people. For them it is a matter of admitting they were wrong and swallowing their pride and ego—qualities that a human being must eschew—and the mortal fear of appearing “small” and diminished in front of others—younger or in a subordinate position or whatever. Only those who have apologised promptly and sincerely can explain the difference it makes and how much it actually enhances a per-

son’s image and esteem in the eyes of the others. Apart from being timely, if articulated with sincerity and meaning and the intention of not repeating such a lapse, it is even better.

True, we all slip up now and then—we say things in the heat of the moment, we are quick to fix the blame, we project our baggage onto some hapless soul, but the least that we can do is offer a heartfelt apology.

While it is common to overreact sharply to imagined insults, we would do well to remember that even the one

playing the victim has hurt others on occasions. What is dented is the ego, and with practice one can learn not to let the ego trigger a bigger confrontation. It is not that one has to lump insults. One can choose to handle the same with a degree of grace and knowing where it is all coming from and what it will lead to.

Even if we walk into a store or restaurant and ask for or order something that is unavailable, the sales staff respond, saying, “Sorry, this is not available, but we can make a note of this request or offer you

something else.”

It is the same between us and God. In *Mahabharata*, Arjuna apologises to Krishna for doubting his words of advice and treating him more like a cousin rather than a guru on several occasions.

Whenever Hindus perform a *havan* or *pooja* or *parikrama* (circumambulations around a temple), forgiveness is sought for mistakes committed knowingly or unknowingly during the conduct of the ritual, for causing harm to nature, her bounty and God’s beings, and for using chants for the same. Seeking forgiveness should never be such a struggle.



Asha Bhosle after receiving Dada Saheb Phalke award on December 12, 2001.
REUTERS



Accolades
She won multiple awards, including the Padma Vibhushan and National Awards, and was also nominated twice for the Grammys.



80 years of melodious singing
Asha Bhosle sang for more than eight decades, recording an incredible 12,000 songs. Her first song came in 1943 at the age of 10 for the Marathi film *Majha Bal*.

Inspiring figure
The Black Eyed Peas drew inspiration from her music, and she also collaborated with Boy George, Stephen Lauscombe and former Australian cricketer Brett Lee.



Entrepreneur
The singer was also a successful entrepreneur and ran the popular restaurant chain Asha's in Dubai and the UK.

Banga Bibhushan
She was honoured with Banga Bibhushan Samman in 2018 for her contributions to the Bengali music industry. She worked with legends like Manna Dey and Salil Chowdhury.

Voice of versatility and charm falls silent

8-DECADE SYMPHONY: Asha Bhosle's melodies carried cinema through eras of romance and rebellion



The passing of Asha Bhosle Ji has created a huge void in the world of music. Her legendary career as an iconic singer has defined an era of music in India... She led her life on her own terms as an artist and as an individual... Her music will live forever.

Droupadi Murmu
President



Her extraordinary musical journey, spanning decades, enriched our cultural heritage and touched countless hearts across the world.

Narendra Modi
Prime Minister



Through her voice, her art will forever remain immortal amongst us. In this hour of grief, my deepest condolences are with her bereaved loved ones.

Rahul Gandhi
Congress leader



Didi and her music will never ever perish from this phase of this earth till human beings exist. Because you cannot describe in words.

Shankar Mahadevan
Singer-composer



Asha Tai, as she was popularly known, recorded more than 12,000 songs in over 20 Indian and foreign languages. She collaborated with leading music directors, composers and playback singers across generations.

In 2011, the Guinness World Records recognised her as the most recorded artist in music history.

From the sensuous energy of *Piya Tu Ab To Aaja* in *Caravan* to the rebellious charm of *Dum Maro Dum* in *Hare Rama Hare Krishna*, Asha's voice became synonymous with bold, experimental music in the 1970s. She carried this golden run forward with the romantic classic *Chura Liya Hai Tumne* from *Yaadon Ki Baaraat* and the electrifying *Yeh Mera Dil* in *Don*.

Reinvention

In the 1980s, she revealed a different depth through hauntingly beautiful ghazals such as *In Aankhon Ki Masti* and *Dil Cheez Kya Hai* from *Umrao Jaan*, followed by the deeply evocative *Mera Kuch Samaan* in *Ijaazat*. In the decades that followed, Asha reinvented herself effortlessly — capturing youthful exuberance in *Rangeela Re* from *Rangeela*, lending classical grace to *Radha Kaise Na Jale* in *Lagaan*, and delivering a chart-topping hit with *Kajra Re* from *Bunty Aur Babli*.

She won numerous awards and honours, including the Padma Vibhushan, the Dadasaheb Phalke Award, the Maharashtra Bhushan Award and the Banga Vibhushan Award.

The Mangeshkar siblings — late Lata Mangeshkar, Asha Bhosle, Usha Mangeshkar, Meena Khadilkar and their brother Hridaynath Mangeshkar — dominated the Hindi and Marathi music industry for several decades.

Born on September 8, 1933, in Goar in Sangli district, Maharashtra, to Pandit Deenanath Mangeshkar and Shevanti, Asha rose to become an iconic star.

At the age of 16, she married her personal secretary, 31-year-old Ganpatrao Bhosle. The couple separated in 1960. Later, she married music director RD Burman, who passed away in 1994. She won the Filmfare Award for Best Female Playback Singer seven times and the National Film Award twice — for *Dil Cheez Kya Hai* from *Umrao Jaan* and *Mera Kuch Samaan* from *Ijaazat*.



Bharat Ratna Lata Mangeshkar (R) felicitates her sister Asha Bhosle. DH/PV ARCHIVE



PM Narendra Modi with the singer during an event. PTI



Bhosle during a book launch in Mumbai. PTI



At her residence in Mumbai in 2001. PTI



An artist pays tribute to the late veteran singer in Mumbai on Sunday. PTI

When Pancham met Asha: The sound of a partnership

MUMBAI, DHNS

Asha Bhosle and Rahul Dev Burman's love story began in a recording studio and was shaped not by words but by music, resulting in some of the most timeless songs Hindi cinema has ever known.

RD stood for experimentation and Asha was all about versatility. He put Asha on a big canvas by giving her bold, modern and experimental songs. The duo transformed the soundscape of Hindi film music in the 1960s-70s.

"He'd come to see his father record *Chaahe tum kitna bhula* for *Armaan* at the Famous studio in Mahalaxmi. He was a thin, pale boy in white, wearing thick glasses. Since he was short, he looked younger than



R D Burman with Asha Bhosle

his age. The boy asked me for an autograph and said he'd heard my Marathi *natya sangeet* on the radio," Bhosle said in 2022 about Burman, who was six years younger than her.

Their musical partnership began years later when they collaborated for Vijay Anand's musical thriller *Teesri Manzil* (1966).

They shared a professional relationship and love, which transformed to partnership, compan-

ionship and marriage. In fact, the RD-Asha association is one of the biggest partnerships that the Indian cinema and music had.

Some of RD-Asha's iconic creations include *Aaja Aaja Main Hoon Pyar Tera* (*Teesri Manzil*), *O Haseena Zulfunwali* (*Teesri Manzil*), *Piya Tu Ab To Aaja* (*Caravan*), *Dum Maro Dum* (*Hare Rama Hare Krishna*), *Chura Liya Hai Tumne Jo Dil Ko* (*Yaadon Ki Baaraat*), *Bahon Mein Chale Aao* (*Anamika*), *Do Lafzon Ki Hai Dil Ki Kahani* (*The Great Gambler*), and *Mera Kuch Samaan* (*Ijaazat*) remain enduring highlights of their collaboration. The last song earned Asha a National Award.

Burman died in January 1994, of a heart attack. He was 54. (With PTI inputs)

BJP kickstarts process to name party's first CM in Bihar

NEW DELHI, DHNS: The BJP on Sunday appointed Union Agriculture Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan as the central observer for electing the BJP legislature party leader in Bihar.



Shivraj Singh Chouhan

Nitish stepped down as chief minister to be a Rajya Sabha member. His successor will be the state's first BJP chief minister.

BJP national general secretary and headquarters in-charge Arun Singh said the party's parliamentary board took the decision. Chouhan said he would travel to Bihar, and on April 14, a meeting of the BJP legislature party will be held.

"I am just a party worker, and it is my duty to discharge whatever responsibility is assigned to me with complete honesty and dedication," he told reporters.

BJP has had initial hiccups with the government formation, with some leaders not agreeing to the names put forward. The two deputy CMs—Samrat Choudhary and Vijay Kumar Sinha—are considered the frontrunners for the top post.

However, party insiders say the high command could spring a surprise as it has done in other states.

As per the agreement for government formation, the BJP will have the CM, while Nitish's son will be named the deputy CM. JD(U) is keen on one deputy CM.

Modi writes to all parties, seeks floor leaders' support to clear Bill

NEW DELHI, DHNS

Prime Minister Narendra Modi has reached out to all parties ahead of Parliament's sitting on Thursday to clear a law for early implementation of the 33% women's quota, seeking their support, saying this is the right time to turn their long-time aspiration of increasing women's representation in politics into reality.

In letters to floor leaders of all parties in Parliament on Friday, he said he was writing to them so that all "come together in one voice" to pass the constitutional amendment, as it is a "moment to demonstrate" responsibility towards women and future generations.

The Budget session of Parliament is reconvening

NARENDRA MODI Prime Minister

Since all political parties have expressed the desire to increase women's representation in politics for a long time, this is the right time to turn that aspiration into reality

on Thursday to pass amendments to the Constitution for women's quota after a delimitation.

"It would be great to have many Members of Parliament express their views on this subject in Parliament. This is a moment above any one party or individual... Since all political parties have expressed the desire to increase women's representation in politics for a long time, this is the right time to turn that aspiration into reality," he said.

MPs who contribute to the implementation of the Nari Shakti Vandan Adhiniyam will always take pride in having been part of this historic effort, he said, adding, "Therefore, we must not let this opportunity pass."

portunity pass."

Emphasising that the "special sitting" is an opportunity to further strengthen democracy, he said the timing of the implementation of the quota was discussed when the Bill was passed in September 2023, and the broad consensus was that the 33% quota should become effective at the earliest.

He said the government has held consultations with experts on this subject and sought "suggestions and guidance" from those well-versed in constitutional matters and also engaged in dialogue with political parties. After extensive deliberations, he said they have reached the conclusion that the time has now come to implement the women's quota in its true spirit.

"It is imperative that the 2029 Lok Sabha elections and Assembly elections are conducted with women's reservation in place. This will infuse new energy into India's democratic institutions and strengthen public trust. It will also ensure greater participation and representation in governance," he said.

BJP issues whip to MPs for extended Parl session

NEW DELHI, PTI: The BJP has issued a three-line whip to all of its MPs, urging them to remain present in their respective Houses during the extended Budget session of Parliament starting Thursday.

The Modi government has convened a special three-day sitting from April 16 to 18, during which proposed amendments to the Women's Reservation Act are likely to be brought for consideration and passage.

The Union Cabinet is learnt to have cleared on April 8 draft bills which seek to implement the women's quota before the 2029 parliamentary polls and increase the number of Lok Sabha seats to 816, with 273 reserved for women.

Kharge reiterates demand for all-party meet on bill

NEW DELHI, DHNS: Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge has written to Prime Minister Narendra Modi, expressing concern that the Centre is seeking their cooperation for the early implementation of the 33% women's quota "without revealing any details" on delimitation, and it will be "impossible to have any useful discussion" in such a scenario.

Insisting that the proposed Constitutional amendments will affect both the Centre and the states, he reiterated the demand for an all-party meeting after April 29 to discuss the delimitation issue, which is linked to the amendment to the 33% quota law.

Kharge was replying to Prime Minister Narendra Modi's letter, which had sought the support of Congress to pass the Bills in Parliament.

The prime minister's letter came a day after the Congress Working Committee decided to consult other Opposition parties on April 15 to formulate a common Parliamentary strategy.

"If the special sitting is meant to 'strengthen our democracy' and 'moving forward together, taking everyone along' as you write in the letter, then I would suggest that the government convene an all-party meeting any time after April 29 to discuss the delimitation issue...," Kharge said.

Kharge recalled that Parliament passed the Nari Shakti Vandan Adhiniyam in September 2023 and the Congress wanted it effective immediately. Though in his letter, Modi mentioned that there was a consensus on this, the PM did not implement it, he said.



Mallikarjun Kharge

Women in polls: Parties high on rhetoric, low on action

SHEMIN JOY
NEW DELHI, DHNS

From the Right to the Left, parties are heading to Parliament next week to possibly clear the early implementation of 33% quota for women in lawmaking bodies, but they have not walked the talk in this round of Assembly elections.

Amid the rhetoric over earmarking one-third of the seats in the Lok Sabha and Assemblies, parties like the BJP and the Congress and those on the Left have fewer than 15% women among their candidates in

West Bengal, Tamil Nadu, Kerala and Assam, where they have nearly 100 or more nominees.

The only exception is the Senth-amizhan Seeman-led Naam Tamilar Katchi (NTK), which has fielded women in 117 of the 234 seats in Tamil Nadu—a 50% share. The party had done it the last time as well.

Among the mainstream parties, the Trinamool Congress (TMC) has 17.86% women candidates, the highest among its peers.

This is despite parties wooing women voters — nearly 50% or more of the electorate in poll-bound

states and the Union Territory of Puducherry — with so-called "freebies" like monthly allowances, amid rhetoric about their eagerness to clear hurdles to implementing the 33% quota for the 2029 Lok Sabha polls.

"Winnability" is cited as the biggest reason, with party managers also considering caste arithmetic when choosing candidates.

While data on the latest candidates' family backgrounds are not available, a study indicates that women from political families are more likely to get an election ticket.

An Association for Democratic Reforms (ADR) report from September 2025 showed that almost half the women MPs and MLAs in the country — 251 (47%) of 539 — were dynasts.

Congress spokesperson Shama Mohamed, an aspirant for a ticket from Kerala's Kannur, posted on X after being snubbed: "denied but not defeated... And if the woman happens to be talented, the situation is dire! Very very sad." She was later made a "star-campaigner" in the state.

This time, TMC fielded 52 wom-

en (17.86% of 291) in West Bengal, while its main rival, the BJP, fielded 31 (10.58%) out of 293 nominees. The Congress' 40 (13.6% of 294) candidates are women, while it is 35 (13.72%) out of 255 for the Left.

In Tamil Nadu, DMK has 18 women (10.97%) among 164 candidates, while AIADMK has 19 (11.37%) out of 167. The Congress has a single woman (3.57%) among its 28 candidates, while the BJP has 18.51% (five out of 27), and actor Vijay's TVK 23 (9.82%) out of 234. In Kerala, where the poll concluded on Thursday, LDF fielded 18 women (12.85%).

AAP to oppose increase in LS seats based on 2011 census

NEW DELHI, DHNS: AAP on Sunday made it clear that it will oppose the increase of Lok Sabha and Assembly seats based on the 2011 Census while pledging support for passing a Bill for early implementation of 33% women's quota if it is rolled out for the existing 543 seats in Parliament's Lower House.

The stand was made clear by AAP Rajya Sabha floor leader Sanjay Singh in a post on X and in his interaction with the media in Uttar Pradesh's Sultanpur, after receiving Prime Minister Narendra Modi's letter seeking his party's support for the Bills in Parliament, which is to reconvene on April 16.

Singh said on X, "We support the Women's Reservation Bill. Of the 543 seats in the Lok Sabha, we give our full support to 33% reservation for women. However, a census is necessary to increase the number of seats. Increasing seats without a census is a conspiracy to reduce the number of women in the House. We will not allow any betrayal of women."

In a video of his interaction with media in Sultanpur, which he posted on X, Singh said they will "expose" the government if it goes ahead with increasing the number of seats based on the Census 2011 and not the latest one for implementing the women's quota.

"If you do it without the latest census and delimitation, we will show how you are betraying the women," he said, accusing the ruling BJP of indulging in "drama" ahead of the election in West Bengal and Tamil Nadu.

Kerala dental student’s death sparks protests over casteist slurs

Family alleges teachers called him ‘slum dog’

ARJUN RAGHUNATH
THIRUVANANTHAPURAM, DHNS

The death of a dental student in Kerala, suspected to be by suicide, has triggered strong protests against a section of teachers who allegedly called him a “slum dog” and “rabid dog”, along with other racist remarks. An audio message sent by the student to a friend, detailing the harassment he faced, has come to light, mounting pressure on the police to take stringent action against the college authorities. Nithin Raj, 21, from Uzhamalakkal on the outskirts of Thiruvananthapuram, was a first-year BDS student at Kannur Dental College. He

FATAL WORDS

■ Audio message reveals harassment

■ Student from poor background, parents daily wagers

■ Claims of insults over complexion, caste

■ Teacher accused of deducting marks, issuing threats

■ Two faculty members suspended after allegations

was found dead on the college premises on Friday. According to police, the student ended his life by suicide, allegedly by jumping from the hospital building. Raj, who hailed from a financially weak background, was reportedly subjected to casteist and racist slurs from a section of teachers. His father, Rajan, is a daily-wage painting worker, while his mother, Latha, works as a casual labourer.

Family members alleged that some teachers even called him “slum dog”, “street dog” and “rabid dog”, and insulted him over his dark complexion and lower caste. In an audio message, said to be recorded by Raj, he claimed that a teacher had made insulting remarks about his mother’s health issues and deliberately deducted three marks from his internal exams. One teacher allegedly called him an “idiot” and even threatened to hack him if he stepped outside the campus. The head of the dental anatomy department, Dr MK Ram, and associate professor Dr Sangeetha have been placed under suspension. The Kerala State Human Rights Commission has also sought a report from the police on the incident. Kerala General Education Minister V Sivankutty, who visited Raj’s family on Sunday, said that many colleges were harassing students over internal marks. He assured that stringent action would be taken.

57-day Amarnath Yatra to start from July 3

SRINAGAR, DHNS: The annual Shri Amarnath Yatra will commence on July 3 and conclude on August 28, coinciding with Raksha Bandhan festival. Jammu and Kashmir Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha announced the schedule on Sunday, stating that the 57-day pilgrimage will formally begin with the Pratham Puja on June 29, on the occasion of Jyeshtha Purnima, to seek the blessings of Lord Shiva. He informed that advance registration for the yatra will start from April 15 through both online and offline modes. The facility will be available at 554 designated branches of Jammu and Kashmir Bank, Punjab National Bank, State Bank of India, and Yes Bank across the country. The administration has urged devotees to complete their registration in advance and follow official guidelines to ensure a smooth and safe pilgrimage. The yatra, one of Hinduism’s most revered pilgrimages, involves a trek to the holy cave shrine located at an altitude of about 3,880 metres in the south Kashmir Himalayas. Inside the cave, devotees worship the naturally formed ice Shivaling, believed to symbolise Lord Shiva. The yatra is organised by the Shri Amarnathji Shrine Board, which oversees registration and logistical arrangements.

Centre’s ‘communication gap’ puts Ladakh demands in limbo

ZULFIKAR MAJID
SRINAGAR, DHNS

The stalled dialogue between Ladakh’s leadership and the Union government has moved beyond routine delay into a deeper political impasse, exposing the limits of engagement between New Delhi and a region seeking constitutional safeguards. More than two months after the last round of talks on February 4, there has been no fresh communication from the Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) to the Leh Apex Body (LAB) and Kargil Democratic Alliance (KDA). The absence of even a tentative meeting schedule has effectively frozen a process that was already struggling to find common ground. The February meeting of the high powered committee, chaired by Minister of State for Home Nityanand Rai, ended without a breakthrough despite prolonged discussions. Ladakhi representatives reiterated their core demands — full statehood and inclusion under the Sixth Schedule — but “there was no conclusion”, as LAB co-chairman Chering Dorjay Lakruk put it after the talks. At the heart of the deadlock lies a fundamental divergence. Ladakhi groups argue that without constitutional safeguards — particularly Sixth

Schedule status — there are risks to land ownership, employment and cultural identity in a fragile border region. The Centre, however, has shown reluctance to concede statehood or Sixth Schedule protections, instead indicating preference for alternative mechanisms such as strengthening Hill Councils or limited safeguards under Article 371. What has sharpened the current phase is not just disagreement, but the absence of engagement. LAB leaders have publicly flagged the communication gap. Now, with no response from MHA, LAB and KDA are expected to meet soon to decide their next course of action.

Once a red zone, Telangana's Karreguttalu to be tourism hotspot

S N V SUDHIR
HYDERABAD, DHNS

Karreguttalu, the chain of hills and valleys straddling the Telangana-Chhattisgarh border, was long dreaded as a hideout for top Naxalite leaders and a guerrilla training ground for the banned outfit. However, this region will soon be transformed into a tourist destination on the Telangana side. The state has, for the first time in decades, laid the foundation for a police outpost near Karreguttalu, in Pamunuru village. Telangana DGP B Shivadhar Reddy has announced plans to develop the area. An inter-agency coordination centre will be set up to strengthen collaboration among the For-

est, Revenue and Police Departments, and the CRPF. The hill range, comprising 15 to 20 adjoining peaks, has long been a strategic stronghold of the Maoists. Last year, security forces participating in Operation Kagar set up a temporary base camp within the range, hoisted the national flag and installed a mobile communication tower near the hills. Reddy recently visited the Karreguttalu hills in Mulugu district and declared the area free from Naxalite activities. He also laid foundation stones for multiple development projects in Pamunuru and assured sustained support for the development and welfare of the Guthi Koya tribal community. As part of the welfare initiatives, the DGP extended assistance to seven underprivileged families of Pamunuru, comprising an auto-rickshaw, a two-wheeler and monthly essential provisions. The DGP has also inaugurated a women-led nursery at Mormoru. It aims to promote women’s participation in afforestation and generate sustainable livelihoods through nursery-based activities.

MISCELLANY

◆ COMICS ◆

Blondie



Beetle Bailey



Marvin



Hagar The Horrible



Peanuts



JUMBLE

Unscramble these Jumbles, one letter to each square, to form four ordinary words.

SUHL

ROPDU

NWRIEN

GAORND

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Ans. “ ”
here: (Answers tomorrow)

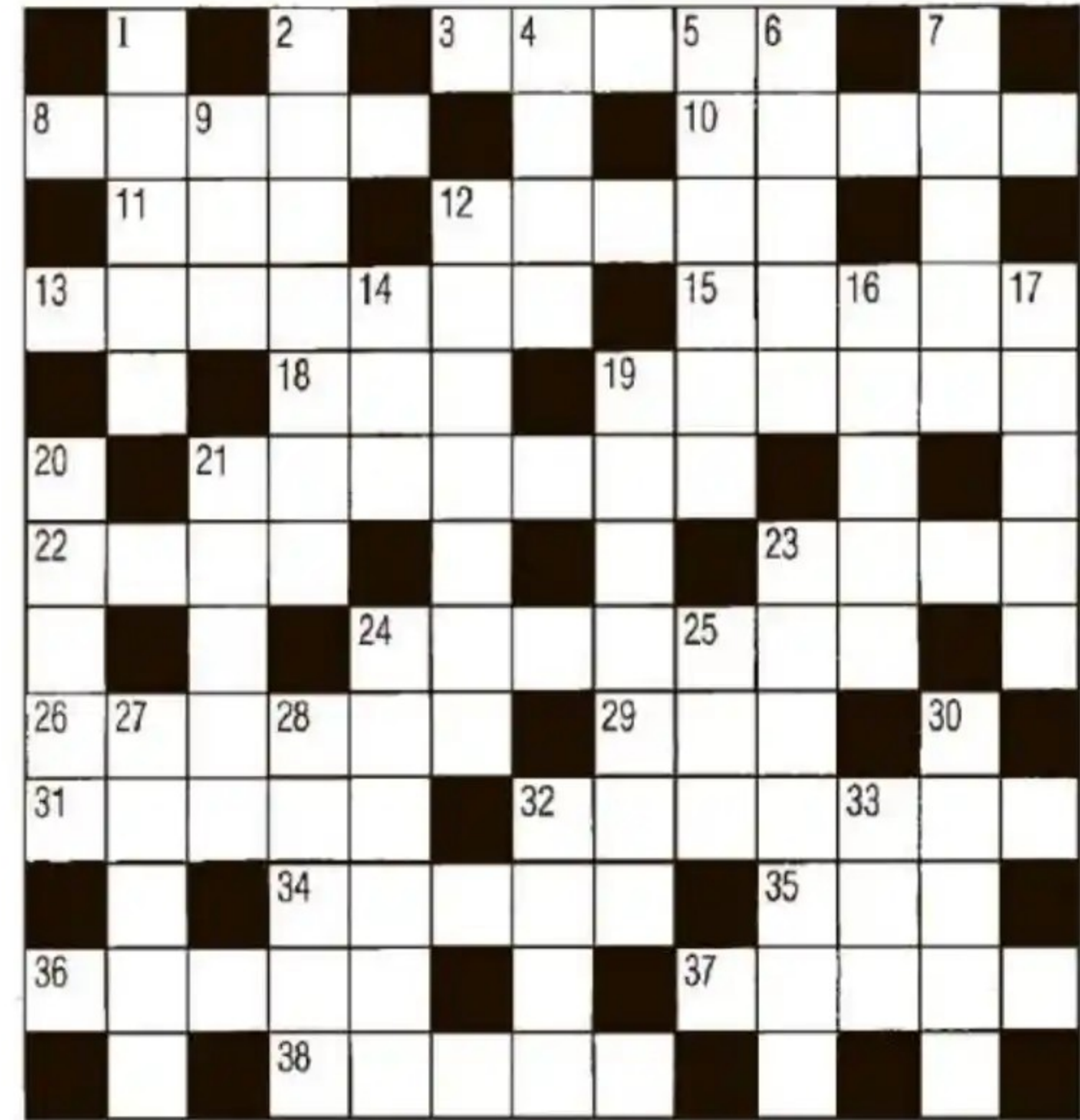
Saturday's Jumbles: CLOUT ABIDE DRAFTY ATTACH
Answer: The taxi ended up with lots of small dings after Mother Nature — HAILED A CAB

THAT SCRAMBLED WORD GAME
By David L. Hoyt and Jeff Kneurek

Do you feel guilty about not doing anything right now? I think we've done our share for one day.

THE AFRICAN FELINES WERE EXHAUSTED AFTER A LONG DAY AND WERE JUST ---

CROSSWORD CHALLENGE 12393



- ACROSS
- 3 Slays (5)
- 8 Twists out of shape (5)
- 10 Weird (5)
- 11 Knight's title (3)
- 12 Circular (5)
- 13 According to reason (7)
- 15 Stories (5)
- 18 Feline (3)
- 19 Sixty seconds (6)
- 21 Regulate (7)
- 22 Small pointed missile (4)
- 23 Thick paper (4)
- 24 Meeting for discussion (7)
- 26 Solution (6)
- 29 Gratuify (3)
- 31 Indian instrument (5)
- 32 Abundant (7)
- 34 Male voice (5)
- 35 Sound of annoyance (3)
- 36 Lustre (5)
- 37 Fact (5)
- 38 Prepared (5)
- DOWN
- 1 Worker in stone (5)
- 2 Fruit (7)
- 4 Object of worship (4)
- 5 Edible seed (6)
- 6 Chair on poles (5)
- 7 Fastening pin (5)
- 9 Manipulate fraudulently (3)
- 12 Rattlesnake, informally (7)
- 14 Container (3)
- 16 Of the moon (5)
- 17 Shabby (5)
- 19 School prefect (7)
- 21 Hard part of bread (5)
- 23 Metropolis (7)
- 24 Tranquil (6)
- 25 Pinch (3)
- 27 Time when dark (5)
- 28 Liquid for drinking (5)
- 30 Build (3,2)
- 32 Ribbed cloth (4)
- 33 On strike (3)

- CRYPTIC
- ACROSS
- 3 Choose possibly to take Lee to court (5)
- 8 It's rough being right in a mess! (5)
- 10 Tough master embraced by a female (2-3)
- 11 Bit of a grimace from a Scot (3)
- 12 Was Gertrude a mug? (5)
- 13 Clip one unfairly in a game (7)
- 15 Full of pith, yet not vegetable (5)
- 18 Continental street of sadness (3)
- 19 Goes into business to create upsets (4,2)
- 21 Barely runs on narrow lines (7)
- 22 Goddess who lives again? (4)
- 23 French name for a bit of a renegade (4)
- 24 The fear possibly associated with a white one? (7)
- 26 Try to get free perhaps? (3,3)
- 29 Strain a gut? (3)
- 31 Possibly early bird at the egg farm (5)
- 32 Canada's ratable system (7)
- 34 Worried about the future? (5)
- 35 It doesn't agree with the number on a tin opener (3)
- 36 Something a woman's burnt? (5)
- 37 A canoe could be lost in it (5)
- 38 A long piece can still be comic (5)
- DOWN
- 1 Urchin who hasn't finished playing (5)
- 2 Costers' companions? (7)
- 4 Galatea's keeping us waiting (4)
- 5 Rings you can get from most chemists (6)
- 6 Doctrine you can read up (5)
- 7 Language usable for a letter to an aunt (5)
- 9 Managed to participate in athletics? (3)
- 12 Possibly restless peelers? (7)
- 14 Charlie has half an hour with the dog (3)
- 16 Eastern floral centre (5)
- 17 Where some Belgians are in the money, presumably (5)
- 19 Quickly get out in the alley! (7)
- 20 Latest thing in ties (5)
- 21 One corner in heaven that's just like velvet (5)
- 23 In historical times, wonderfully green outskirts of the City (7)
- 24 Woody ways into a well-defended place (6)
- 25 Centre of revolution (3)
- 27 Impertinent, say, about saints (5)
- 28 Good times for cash payments around Tuesday (5)
- 30 It's essentially oily and flowery (5)
- 32 A fantastic wine? (4)
- 33 A bit fishy, but heroes use it (3)

SOLUTIONS TO CROSSWORD 2675

ACROSS: 1 Kowtow, 4 Caucasus, 9 Melody, 10 Cast-iron, 12 Unbiased, 13 Toupee, 15 Trim, 16 Low profile, 19 High and dry, 20 Glib, 23 Nearby, 25 Infantry, 27 Feasible, 28 Monaco, 29 Litigate, 30 Decent.

DOWN: 1 Kumquat, 2 Well-being, 3 Ordeal, 5 Alas, 6 Cotton on, 7 Strip, 8 Sincere, 11 Records, 14 Spring, 17 Ill at ease, 18 Rumbling, 19 Handful, 21 Boycott, 22 Galore, 24 Adapt, 26 Flat.

◆ SU-DO-KU-6878 ◆

6			2	3		7
	1			7		6
		2				9
		6		8		3
			3	9		
	3		4		9	
					3	
5	4		7			9
	6		2	1		8
						5

8 5 1 3 6 4 2 7 9
2 9 7 5 8 1 6 3 4
4 3 6 7 2 9 1 5 8
1 7 9 4 5 3 8 6 2
3 6 2 8 9 7 5 4 1
5 8 4 2 1 6 7 9 3
7 1 5 9 3 2 4 8 6
9 2 8 6 4 5 3 1 7
6 4 3 1 7 8 9 2 5

SOLUTION TO 6877

To solve the puzzle: To solve a su-do-ku puzzle, every digit from 1 to 9 must appear in each of the nine vertical columns, in each of the nine horizontal rows, and in each of the nine boxes.

hard

HITORI-3332

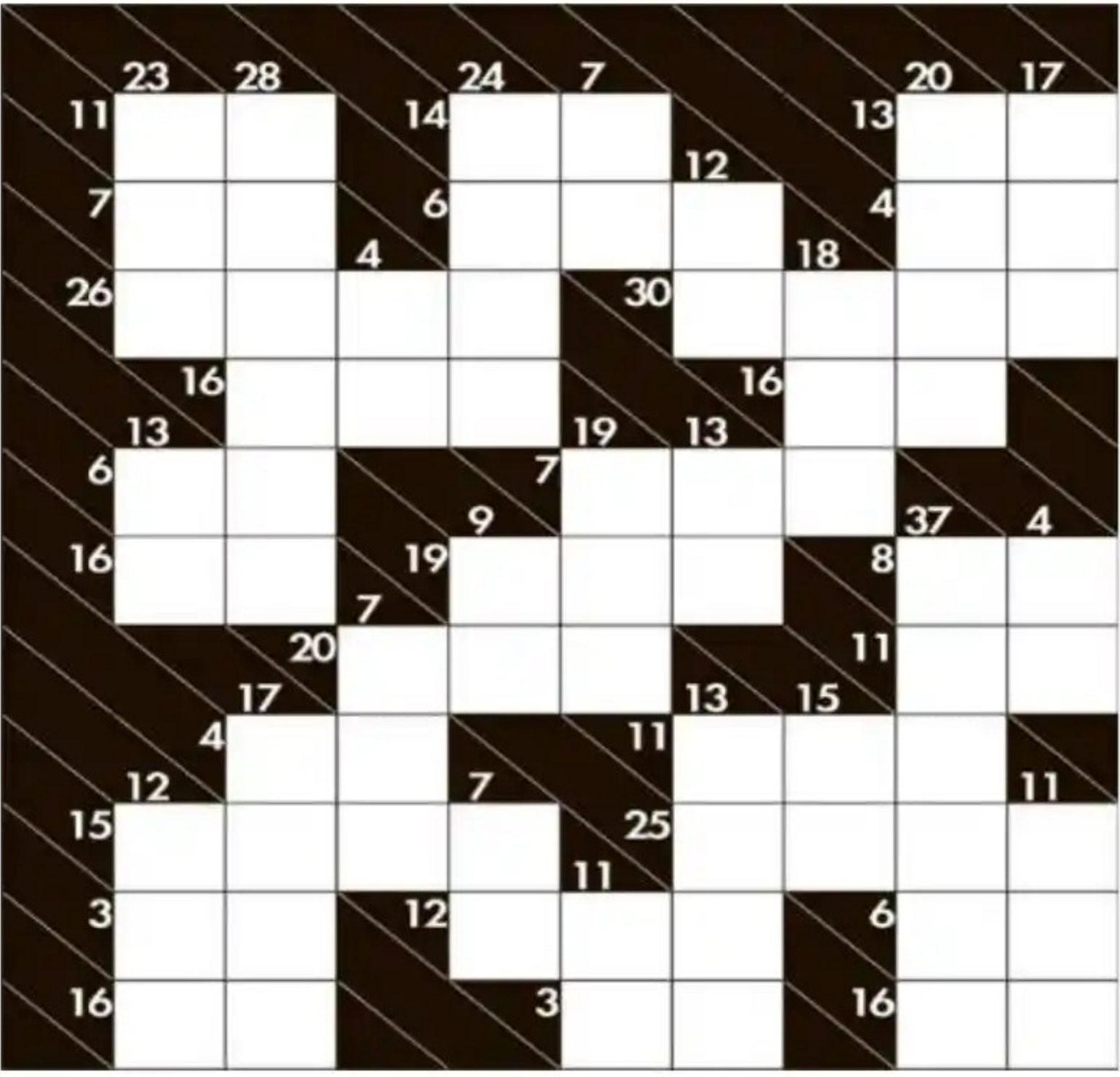
3	1	2	7	3	3	4	6
4	3	1	7	5	7	6	4
5	7	3	6	7	4	8	8
2	7	3	5	1	6	8	7
7	4	6	8	4	2	2	5
1	8	8	4	2	7	3	8
7	7	8	7	6	1	5	4
7	5	4	3	8	4	2	3

SOLUTION TO 3331

6	7	3	8	1
5	4	2	6	7
2	3	1	4	5
7	1	8	5	6
6	8	7	4	5
4	8	6	5	2
5	1	8	3	7
3	7	5	6	1

To solve the puzzle: Eliminate numbers by filling in squares so that remaining cells in that row or column do not repeat that number more than once. Filled-in cells cannot be horizontally or vertically adjacent. The un-filled cells must form a single component connected horizontally and vertically.

KAKURO- 3332



SOLUTION TO 3331

1	7	5	1	4
3	2	9	1	4
8	4	8	3	7
6	4	1	6	9
6	5	9	7	9
2	8	9	2	8
1	3	7	9	4
3	8	4	8	6
7	6	2	1	8
3	5	1	2	3
5	9			

To solve the puzzle: Put a number from 1 through 9 in a cell. No zeros. A number in a cell separated by diagonal line tells the sum of numbers in consecutive cells at its right or downward. No number may appear more than once in consecutive cells.

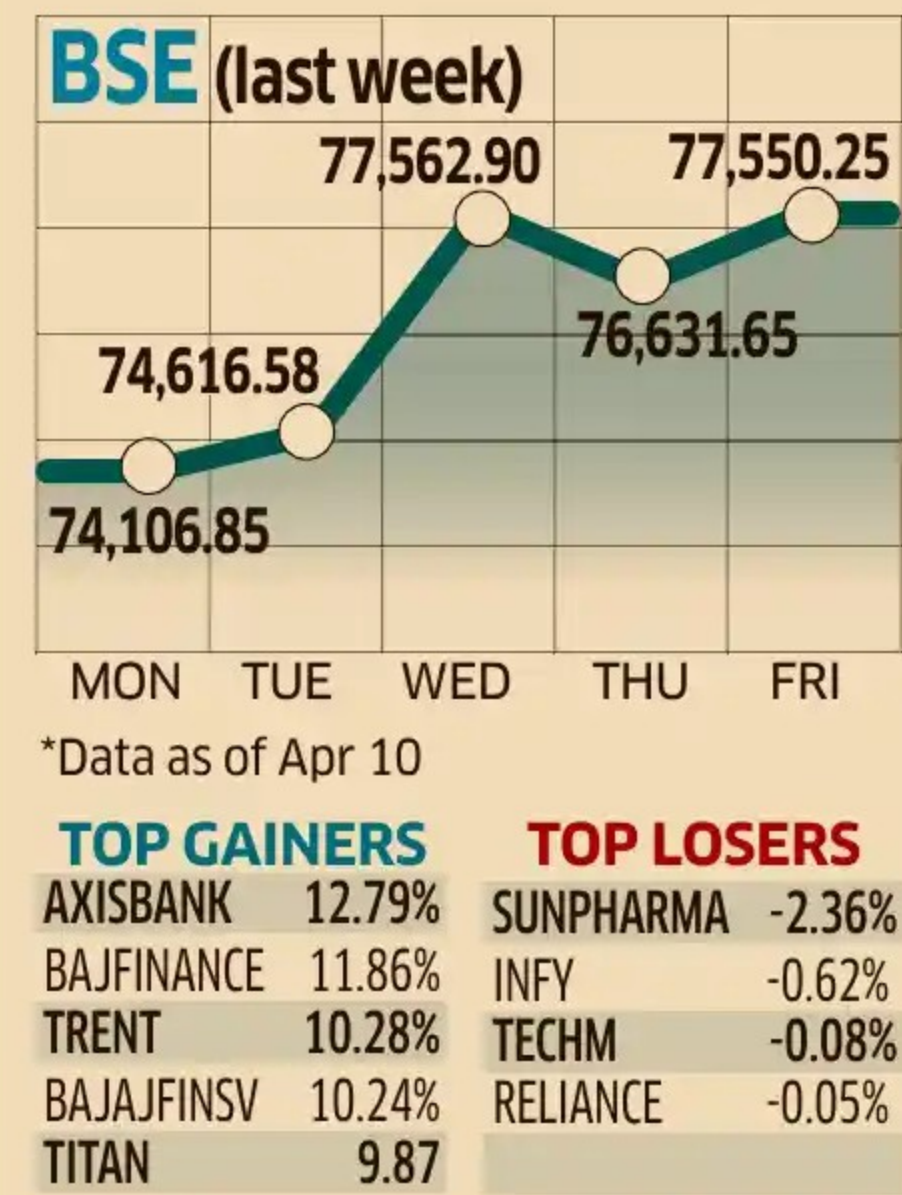
SU DO KU X - 3884

			1		5
				9	3
	1		2	5	7
		2		6	
	5	6			
		3			
5					
4	6			3	7

SOLUTION TO 3883

5	9	7	6	4	8	1	3	2
4	8	2	3	5	1	9	6	7
3	1	6	9	2	7	8	4	5
7	2	3	1	6	4	5	9	8
9	4	1	8	3	5	7	2	6
8	6	5	7	9	2	3	1	4
2	3	9	5	7	6	4	8	1
6	5	8	4	1	9	2	7	3
1	7	4	2	8	3	6	5	9

To solve the puzzle: The objective is to place the numbers 1 to 9 in the empty squares so that each row, each column, each 3x3 box and each shaded diagonal line contains the same number only once.



TOP PICKS

The data is sourced from Motilal Oswal Financial Services Limited

Mtar Technologies

(ID: MTARTECH)

Upside **+15%****

Last close ₹4,181

Target: **₹4,810***

Syrma SGS

(ID: SYRMA)

Upside **+15%****

Last close ₹870

Target: **₹1,000***

Shriram finance

(ID: SHRIRAMFIN)

Upside **+17%****

Last close ₹1,026

Target: **₹1,200***

Titan

(ID: TITAN)

Upside **+16%****

Last close ₹4,496

Target: **₹5,200***

Larsen & Tubro

(ID: LT)

Upside **+11%****

Last close ₹3,961

Target: **₹4,400***

* Target price has been calculated on the basis of fundamentals ** Upside refers to more value stock is expected to generate than its current price

TCS makes 25k fresher offers this fiscal

MUMBAI, PTI: TCS has made 25,000 offers to freshers for the current fiscal, and pointed out that the demand scenario will determine whether it hires more college graduates, a top official has said.

The largest information technology services company had hired 44,000 freshers in FY26, one of the highest by any private sector employer in the country, despite the headwinds it faced.

“We have made 25,000 offers to freshers for FY27. Clarity on demand will lead to more hiring,” its chief executive and managing director K

K Krithivasan

Krithivasan told PTI in an interview over the weekend. When asked if the company will up its dependence on lateral hires and if the delivery model has undergone any change, he replied in the negative.

Explaining that it takes up to nine months of training before a fresher comes on the floor, while a lateral can deliver immediately, he said, adding that business needs will influence its hiring strategies.

The company has been hiring 40,000 or more freshers every fiscal year for at least three years now.

When asked if there is a possibility of another round of restructuring like the one in FY26, when it laid off at least 12,000 staffers, Krithivasan limited himself to saying that people can have “thriving careers” with the company till they perform well.

Denying that the ingress of AI technologies had anything to do with the layoffs last year, he said TCS had to let go of people, mostly senior-level talent.

Foreign Portfolio Investors sell Rs 48,905 crore from equities in first 11 days of April

BENGALURU, DHNS: Foreign investors continued to withdraw their holdings from the Indian equity markets. During the first 11 days of April, the foreign portfolio investors (FPIs) have sold Rs 48,905 crore through the exchanges taking the total FPI selling for 2026 to Rs 1,90,046 crore. In the month of March, FPIs sold a record Rs 1,22,182 crore.

The energy crisis triggered by the

Filing season 2026: What taxpayers need to watch

B E KUMAR PRASAD

CHARTERED ACCOUNTANT & PARTNER,

BALAKRISHNA AND CO

India now has a new Income Tax Act. The Income Tax Act, 2025 came into force on April 1, 2026, replacing the 1961 law for income earned from that date onwards. But the return you file this July is still for income earned between April 2025 and March 2026. So that return continues to be governed by the old law.

That is why this filing season may confuse many taxpayers. Your TDS for the current year may already be getting deducted under the new law showing as Tax Year 2026-27, whereas the ITR you file now for AY 2026-27. In simple terms, two systems are operating back-to-back, even though they apply to different income periods.

The first practical question is: which ITR form should you use? The CBDT has widened eligibility for simpler forms. A resident individual with income up to Rs 50 lakh can now use ITR-1 even with income from up to two house properties. Presumptive taxpayers under sections

44AD, 44ADA and 44AE can similarly continue with ITR-4, subject to conditions. At the same time, some taxpayers may have to move out of the simpler forms. Those with foreign retirement benefit account disclosures under section 89A, for instance, may need to file ITR-2 or ITR-3, as applicable.

The forms also ask for more detail than before. Taxpayers can now provide two addresses and two mobile numbers. Donation reporting has become tighter: for Section 80G claims, payment reference details such as UPI, cheque or NEFT/RTGS number and bank IFSC are now required. For political contributions under Section 80GGC, the party's name and PAN must also be disclosed. Even ITR-1 and ITR-4 now specifically provide for unrealised rent.

One choice deserves special attention: the tax regime. The new regime is the default. Anyone wanting deductions such as Section 80C, Section 80D, HRA or hous-

ing-loan benefits must consciously opt for the old regime where eligible. Salaried taxpayers generally have year-to-year flexibility, but business and professional taxpayers face tighter switching rules. A casual click can become an expensive mistake.

Another useful caution: do not treat prefilled data as final truth. Before filing, reconcile Form 16, Form 26AS, AIS and your own records, especially for bank interest, capital gains and donations. Small mismatches often lead to avoidable notices later.

Taxpayers with foreign assets or foreign income should be especially careful. Details in Schedule FA, foreign bank accounts, overseas shares, RSUs, retirement accounts and foreign-source income must be reported correctly in the appropriate ITR form. Where foreign tax credit is claimed, Form 67 and supporting records such as tax deduction certificates, proof of payment, foreign tax returns and

computation workings become crucial. In cross-border taxation, documentation is often the deciding factor. These records should be preserved carefully for at least six years, and preferably longer where foreign assets or complex claims are involved.

There are also practical changes in the reporting formats. F&O traders, for example, will notice more focused disclosure requirements in the business return. Due dates too need attention: July 31 for many non-business taxpayers, August 31 for certain non-audit business and professional cases, and later dates where audit or transfer pricing applies.

The message is simple. The new law has arrived, but this July's return still belongs to the old one. Taxpayers who understand that distinction, choose the correct form, verify disclosures carefully and filing on time can avoid most of the confusion this transition year is likely to create.

Gold loans and India's MSME opportunity

Indians no longer treat gold as an idle asset, they are putting it to work

ALEXANDER GEORGE MUTHOOT

India's 5.7 crore MSMEs sit at the heart of this economy - 36% of manufacturing output, nearly half of our exports, over 25 crore livelihoods. Yet for decades, a vast number of these entrepreneurs have remained either credit-invisible or perpetually underserved. Not because they lack assets, but because the assets they hold did not fit the templates that traditional credit systems were built around. What they do hold, almost universally, is gold.

India's households are estimated to hold around 34,600 tonnes of gold - equivalent to nearly 89% of the country's GDP and valued at approximately \$3.8 trillion, according to a Morgan Stanley report (October 2025). This stock exceeds the combined official gold reserves of the United States, Germany, and Italy. For generations, this gold was treated as sacred - not collateral, but family heirloom. Today, that relationship is getting decisively renegotiated for the better. Indians are no longer treating this gold as idle asset, they are putting it to work for their future, on their own terms.

A credit revolution unfolding in real time

Loans against gold jewellery surged 128.8% year-on-year to nearly Rs 4 lakh crore in January 2026, up from Rs 1.75 lakh crore a year prior. Their share of bank retail credit has doubled to 6% in a single year. Gold loans recorded triple-digit growth rates since February 2025, far outpacing overall credit expansion.

Entrepreneurs who once reached for gold loans reluctantly, in times of a cash crisis, are now proactively leveraging it to finance seasonal inventory, fund an expansion, or seize a time-sensitive opportunity.

Speed is a competitive advantage

To understand why gold loans are structurally suited to MSMEs, one has to understand the timely economics of small businesses. A garment exporter spotting discounted fabric cannot wait weeks for a credit appraisal. A food processor preparing for a local festival operates within days. A contractor bridging a receivables gap cannot depend on cash flows that have yet to arrive. Gold loans are architecturally suited to all three scenarios. An entrepreneur can walk into a branch with gold jewellery and walk out with working capital in under 60 minutes. The bullet repayment structure, with principal and interest settled at tenure end instead of monthly outflows, keeps capital within the business during its most productive period. For an MSME operating on thin margins and irregular receivables, this is not just convenience. It is a structural advantage that most formal credit products are not built to offer.

There is a second, less discussed benefit. Gold loans do not require an MSME to have formalised financial data to access credit - with no GST history review, or credit score threshold, or co-signatory requirement. For millions of micro-en-

terprises still in the process of building credit histories, gold loans function as a bridge into the formal credit ecosystem. Gold prices rose sharply in recent times, with global forecasts pointing to further appreciation ahead. The collateral value of household gold, long sitting idle in family lockers, has also quietly surged, giving MSMEs an asset-driven credit upgrade that no conventional credit assessment can replicate.

Democratising capital

The story of who is borrowing is as instructive as how much they are borrowing. According to the CRIF High Mark 'The Credit Goes to Her' 2026 report, women now hold 43.5% of India's total gold loan portfolio. Across much of rural and semi-urban India, gold jewellery is often the only asset a woman holds in her own name. The surge in women-led micro-enterprises such as tailoring units in Rajasthan, organic agri-startups in Maharashtra, home-based food ventures in Tamil Nadu are being financed, by women exercising economic agency through what they already own.

The demographic shift is equally telling. The 31-40 age cohort now holds nearly 30% of the active gold loan portfolio, making it the single largest segment by volume. These are not reluctant borrowers navigating social stigma. They are aspirational, digitally-aware entrepreneurs who treat gold as a high-velocity financial instrument rather than only a family heirloom. The stigma is dissolving. Strategy is overtaking its place.

The credit gap facing India's MSMEs will not be closed by any single instrument. It will be closed by many, each suited to a different borrower, at a different stage, with a different need. But for the millions of entrepreneurs who hold gold, who operate at speed, who are building businesses before they have the paperwork to prove it, the credit line is already there. The question is how deliberately they choose to deploy it.

(The writer is Joint Managing Director, Muthoot Finance)

significantly.

“However, FPIs turning buyers in the market will depend on the situation in West Asia and crude prices. If there is de-escalation in the conflict and crude declines significantly, India's macros will not be impacted materially. If the conflict prolongs India's macros will be impacted. It would be unrealistic to expect FPIs to turn buyers in such a scenario,” Vijayakumar said.

WEEK AHEAD

Markets likely to see positive momentum

Recovery hinges on progress in US-Iran talks and easing of tensions around the Strait of Hormuz

SIDDHARTHA KHEMKA

Indian equity markets are expected to see positive momentum this week, supported by easing geopolitical concerns in West Asia. Further traction will depend on developments in the ongoing negotiations and the normalisation of supply conditions around the Strait of Hormuz, which remain key to shaping global risk sentiment and energy market stability.

Against this backdrop, macro indicators including India CPI & WPI, US PPI, US Initial Jobless Claims, UK GDP, and EU CPI will be closely tracked. The ongoing earnings season is expected to drive stock-specific action, with results from ICICI AMC, ICICI Prudential, ICICI Lombard, Wipro, HDFCLife, HDFC AMC, and Angel One to be announced in the next few days.

Last week, markets staged a powerful rebound, with gains broad-based across segments. The Nifty-50 surged 5.9%—its best weekly rally in five years—and reclaimed the 24,000 mark. Nifty Midcap 100 and Nifty Smallcap 100 advanced 7.8% and 7.6%, respectively, signalling a clear revival in risk appetite. The ceasefire-driven improvement in sentiment, alongside a correction in crude prices, provided a strong trigger for the broad-based rally. Sectoral performance was positive, led by Realty (+13%), Capital Markets (+11.7%), and Auto (+11.6%).

The correction in crude prices is particularly constructive for India, as it alleviates pressure on inflation, the current account, and the currency, while also supporting fiscal dynamics. Sustained moderation in energy prices could materially strengthen the domestic macro backdrop.

From a policy standpoint, the RBI maintained status quo on rates at 5.25% while retaining a neutral stance. The commentary reflected a relatively cautious undertone, with FY27 GDP growth projected at 6.9% and inflation at 4.6%, alongside upward revisions in crude and currency assumptions. Despite this, stable rates continue to support valuations, particularly across rate-sensitive sectors such as financials,

Key events this week

- India CPI & WPI
- US PPI
- US Initial Jobless Claims
- UK GDP
- EU CPI
- Q4 Results: ICICI AMC, ICICI Prudential, ICICI Lombard, Wipro, HDFC Life

autos, capital goods, and infrastructure.

At a sectoral level, the elevated crude prices continued to have a cascading impact on the oil & gas ecosystem. Oil marketing companies have moved to procure diesel, ATF, and kerosene at discounted refinery transfer prices (up to ₹Rs 60/Rs 50 per litre), providing partial relief, although under-recoveries remain sensitive to crude movements.

Foreign institutional investor flows, which had been a persistent drag on markets amid risk off sentiment due to West Asia war, are now showing early signs of reversal. While FIIs remained net sellers to the tune of ₹Rs 35,000 crore during the first four sessions of April—averaging nearly Rs 9,000 crore of daily outflows—the intensity of selling moderated meaningfully as the week progressed. Outflows declined to ₹Rs 4,500 crore across Wednesday and Thursday (averaging ₹Rs 2,200 crore per day). Importantly, flows turned marginally positive in the final session, with net buying of Rs 672 crore, marking the first inflow after a prolonged 27-session selling streak.

Notably, monthly SIP contributions increased 7.5% MoM to a Rs 32,087 crore in March, marking a ₹7.5% MoM increase, underscoring sustained retail participation despite market volatility.

We expect a phased recovery in the near term, supported by stable macros, improving sentiment, and resilient domestic liquidity. However, sustainability will hinge on progress in US-Iran negotiations and easing of tensions around the Strait of Hormuz, with crude prices, the rupee, and FII flows remaining key near-term drivers. As the earnings season progresses, focus is likely to shift towards company performance and management commentary, driving more stock-specific movements.

(The writer is Head of Research, Wealth Management, Motilal Oswal Financial Services Limited)

DH REVIEW

OnePlus Nord 6: A solid mid-range phone

ROHIT KVN
BENGALURU, DHNS

Last week, OnePlus launched the premium mid-range Nord 6 Series smartphone in India. It is available in two configurations—8GB RAM + 256GB and 12GB RAM + 256GB storage—at Rs 38,999 and Rs 41,999, respectively.

Design, build quality and display

The Nord 6 comes with a new design compared to its predecessor. OnePlus phone features a curved square-shaped camera module with a dual-camera system and an LED flash. The rest of the body has a plain, minimalist design.

On the left side, you will find the Plus Key. Users can programme it to perform operations such as turn on silent/night mode, do not disturb, camera, shortcut to take screenshots, take voice memo, torch, and Mind Space, an AI feature. The latter can assist users in recording on-screen information,

which can be recalled to work on a project. It can scan what's appearing on the phone's screen, offer insights, and, if required, be able to add them to a to-do list.

Rest of the device has the same standard buttons and ports seen in any conventional phone. It has a power and volume rocker on the right side.

It has a speaker, a microphone, dual-SIM slot, and a Type-C USB port at the base. And, at the top, it features a microphone, a proximity sensor and an IR blaster.

The device comes in three colours—Quick Silver, Fresh Mint, and Pitch Black.

The display is protected by a Crystal Guard Glass shield and comes with an IP66/68/69/69K rating and military-grade MIL-STD-810H durability certification. Add to that, the company offers a free cover case.

It sports a 6.78-inch (2772 x 1272 pixels) 1.5K AMOLED display with up to 165Hz dynamic refresh rate, and up to

SPEC SHEET

Display : 6.78-inch (2772 x 1272 pixels) 1.5K AMOLED display with up to 165Hz dynamic refresh rate, and up to 3600 nits peak brightness

Camera : 50MP camera (with a 1/1.95-inch Sony LYTIA-600 SMOS sensor, f/1.8 aperture, OIS: Optical Image Stabilisation) and an 8MP 112-degree ultra-wide camera (with OmniVision OV08F sensor, f/2.2 aperture).

Price : 8GB RAM + 256GB and 12GB RAM + 256GB storage at

Rs 38,999 and

Rs 41,999,

respectively.

Processor : 3.21 GHz Qualcomm Snapdragon 8s Gen 4 octa-core processor paired with Adreno 825 GPU, 8GB / 12GB LPDDR5X RAM, and 256GB UFS 4.1 storage.

3600 nits peak brightness. The screen is really good for multimedia consumption and playing graphics-rich games.

And, the in-display optical fingerprint sensor works smoothly with a low false rejection rate.

Performance

It houses a 3.21 GHz Qualcomm Snapdragon 8s Gen 4 octa-core processor paired with Adreno 825 GPU, 8GB / 12GB LPDDR5X RAM, and 256GB UFS 4.1 storage.

The device can easily handle popular graphics-heavy AAA gaming titles and smoothly run powerful generative Artificial Intelligence applications. It also comes with a G2 Wi-Fi chip to deliver stable, faster data speed for video calls and streaming of content on OTT apps.

The device runs Android 16-based OxygenOS 16 and is guaranteed to get four years of Android OS updates and six years of security patches for protection against cyber threats up to 2032.

It houses a massive 9,000mAh battery. Under normal usage, it can easily last more than a day. It supports 80W fast charging. It can reach from zero to 100% in under 75 minutes. It also supports 27W reverse wired charging.

Photography

OnePlus Nord 6 houses a dual-camera module—a main 50MP camera (with a 1/1.95-inch Sony LYTIA-600 SMOS sensor, f/1.8 aperture, OIS: Optical Image Stabilisation) and an 8MP 112-degree ultra-wide camera (with OmniVision

OV08F sensor, f/2.2 aperture).

The device takes pretty nice pictures in the daylight and in challenging low-light conditions indoors and in the evening.

It also excels with portrait mode images, with sharp focus on the subject and gracefully blurs the background to deliver a bokeh effect.

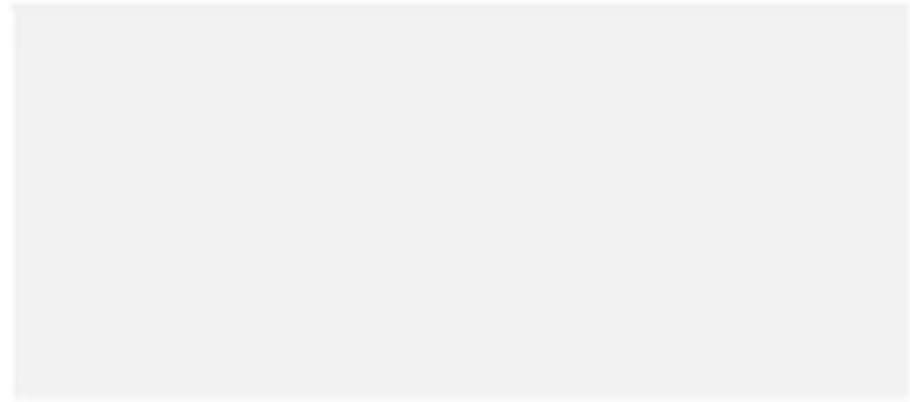
It also supports several AI photography tools such as AI Portrait Glow, AI Perfect Shot, AI Unblur and more.

At night, it captures sharp photos with less noise. It supports 4K video recording at 60 frames per second.

OnePlus phone comes with a 32MP (f/2.0) front camera. It can take good quality selfies in the sunlight. It can also record 4K videos, but at 30fps.

Final thoughts

The OnePlus Nord 6 is packed with features that make it a great value for money. It comes with good build quality, delivers smooth performance, boasts long battery life and features excellent dual-camera hardware.



DH

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Obituaries & Remembrance
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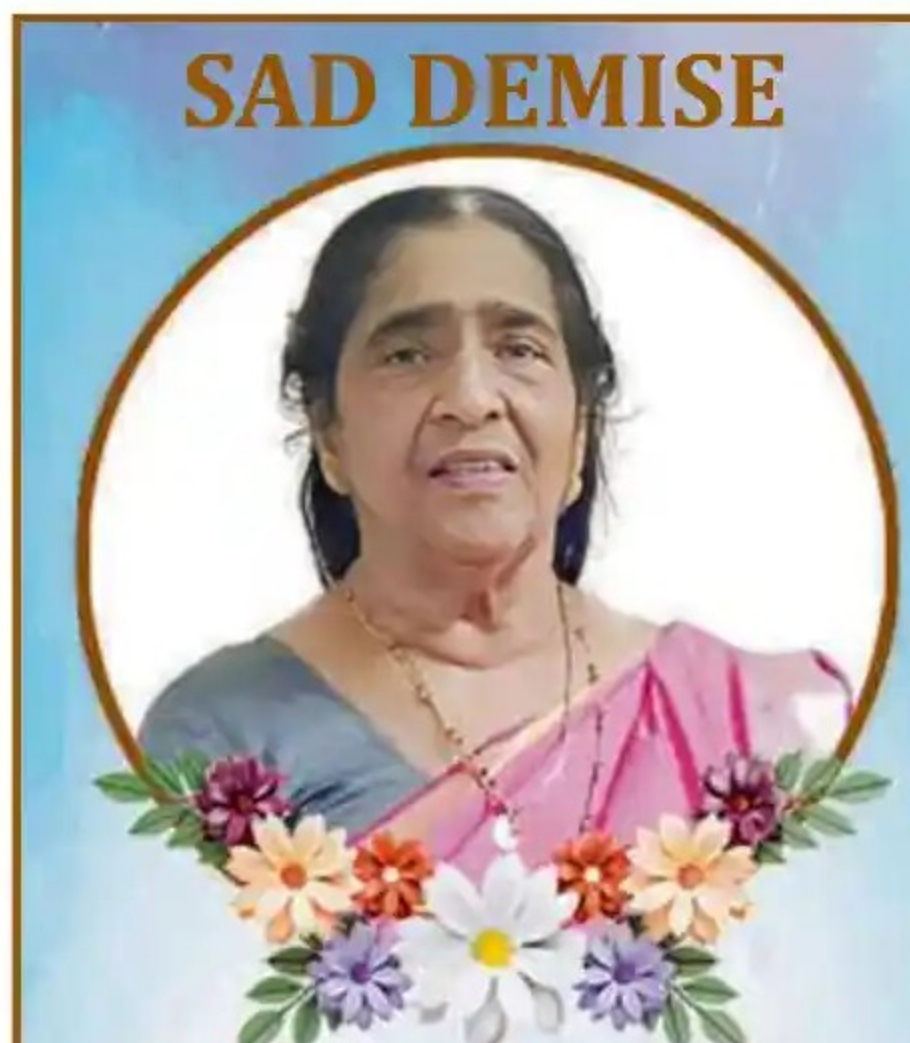
Log on to : <https://homages.deccanherald.com>
or
Scan QR code to access booking form

OBITUARY



Mrs. Pramila Dorairaju
(Wife of Late Mr. S.Dorairaju, IAS
DOB: 01-01-1943 | DOD: 12-04-2026
Her mortal remains will be kept at
her residence:
No.12, 2nd Cross, CSI Compound,
Mission Road, Bangalore -560027
on 13th April 2026 between 8:00
AM and 3:30 PM
to pay the last respects.
The funeral cortege will leave the
residence at 3:30 PM.
The funeral service will be held at
the Indian Christian Cemetery,
Hosur Road, Bangalore
(Gate No.1) At 4:30 PM

Deeply mourned by
Family members, Relatives & Friends
M: 9900063930



Thresiamma Chacko (81 years)
W/o. Late MWO N.A. Chacko
No 40, Gangamma Temple Road,
Gangamma Circle, Bangalore

Passed away peacefully and
went to be with the Lord on 11th
April 2026. Home Viewing will
be held on Monday, 13th April
from 10.30Am to 12 Noon at her
residence in Gangamma Circle,
Bangalore.

**Funeral service on Tuesday,
14th April in Kerala.**
Funeral service will begin at her
residence Natuvazhiparambil
House, Munduvellipady
Athirampuzha, Kottayam at
3:00 PM; followed by funeral
service St.Rita's Chapel,
Athirampuzha and burial at
St. Mary's Forane Church
Cemetery, Athirampuzha.

Grieving Family
Agnew Chacko, Siji & family,
Meenu Chacko & family
James Chacko & family, friends.

Rsvp:
Agnew - 74068 18144
Siji - 95389 62162
<https://shorturl.at/sJAXp>

West Asia prepares for more fighting as Iran-US talks fail

Saudi says key east-west oil pipeline, other major energy facilities restored

DOHA, AFP

A sense of dread spread across the West Asia after talks between the US and Iran collapsed, as fears of renewed fighting rattled an already tense region, with Donald Trump ordering a naval blockade of the Strait of Hormuz.

Following more than 20 hours of talks in the Pakistani capital Islamabad, US Vice President JD Vance admitted the yawning differences between the US and Iran proved to be insurmountable for the moment.

Questions about what would come next and whether the two sides would continue to respect a two-week ceasefire was anybody's guess as both the Iranian and American delegations de-



US Vice President JD Vance talks to Pakistan's Army Chief Asim Munir and Pakistan's Deputy Prime Minister Mohammad Ishaq Dar, before boarding Air Force Two, after peace talks with Iran in Islamabad, on Sunday. REUTERS

parted Pakistan without a deal. "Things could change at any moment," said Aishah, a 32-year-old economic consultant based in Doha.

"It's more about taking each day as it comes."

The failure of the talks however did not surprise many in the region. "I didn't have a lot of hope for them going in, because the two sides want completely opposite things," Laura Kaufman, a 38-year-old school teacher in Tel Aviv, told AFP.

"There didn't seem to be

anyone willing to actually negotiate."

A recent poll found that only 10 percent of the Israeli public believe the war against Iran had constituted a "significant success, compared to 32 percent who view it as a failure".

In Iran, a brief spell of hope that talks would end the hostilities between the long-time foes were quickly dashed.

"I really wanted them to make peace," said Mahsa, a 30-year-old employee of an export company in the Iranian

capital. "It's been almost 45 days now that I've seen everyone stressed. It's a bad situation. Elsewhere in the Middle East, the negotiations' failure only seemed to guarantee more uncertainty."

"I am worried about the continuation of the situation and the return of attacks again, because they were causing me tension," said Imam, an Egyptian housewife living in the UAE capital of Abu Dhabi.

"I was making a great effort not to pass my tension on to the children."

With nerves already battered, President Trump on Sunday ordered an immediate naval blockade of the Strait of Hormuz, vowing to intercept any ship that pays tolls to Tehran while also preventing Iran from earning future oil revenues. "Any Iranian who fires at us, or at peaceful vessels, will be BLOWN TO HELL!" he wrote.

The news came as many in the region were hoping for a return to normality.

Earlier Sunday, Saudi Arabia's energy ministry said its key east-west oil pipeline and other major energy facilities had been restored.

Over 200 dead after Nigerian military airstrike on market

Attack targets Boko Haram militants in Borno state

MAIDUGURI, REUTERS

At least 200 people are feared dead after Nigerian military jets struck a village market while pursuing Islamist militants in the northeast of the country on Saturday night, a councillor for the area and residents said on Sunday. The Nigerian Air Force, responding to reports of civilian casualties, said in a statement it had activated its Civilian Harm Accident and Investigation Cell "to immediately proceed to the location on a fact-finding mission on the allegation". Earlier, the Air Force said it had killed Boko Haram militants in the Jilli axis in Borno state.

The government of neighbouring Yobe state later said in a statement that an air strike on the area had been conducted near a market

where shoppers and vendors had gathered.

"Some people from Geidam LGA (local government area) bordering Gubio LGA in Borno state who went to the Jilli weekly market were affected," said Brigadier General Dahiru Abdulsalam, military adviser to the Yobe state government. He gave no further details.

The strike occurred in a village in Yobe on the border with Borno, the heartland of a long-running insurgency that has killed thousands of people and displaced millions more.

Lawan Zanna Nur Geidam, the councillor and traditional head of Fuchimeram ward in Yobe's Geidam district, told Reuters that those injured were being taken to hospitals in Yobe and Borno.

"It's a very devastating incident at Jilli Market. As I'm speaking to you, over 200 people have lost their lives from the air strike at the market," he said.

Three other residents and an official from an international humanitarian agency confirmed the strike and the estimated death toll.

China sets up new county in Xinjiang near PoK

BEIJING, PTI: China has set up a new county in its volatile Xinjiang province near Pakistan-occupied Kashmir (PoK) and the Afghanistan border in an apparent move to beef up security along the narrow Wakhan Corridor to curb infiltration of Uyghur separatist militants.

The county, named Cengling, is located near the Karakoram mountain range and close to the borders with PoK and Afghanistan, underscoring its strategic significance.

This is the third new county established by China in Xinjiang, a predominantly Muslim Uyghur region, in just over a year.

India last year lodged a protest with China over the creation of Hean and Hekang counties, stating that parts of their jurisdiction fall within its union territory of Ladakh.

Hean includes much of the disputed Aksai Chin plateau, which is part of Ladakh occupied by China in the 1962 war and has remained a focal point of the India-China border dispute.

Orban's rule on line as Hungary votes in closely watched polls

BUDAPEST, AFP: Hungarians flocked to vote on Sunday in a closely watched parliamentary election that could end nationalist Prime Minister Viktor Orban's 16-year stint in power as a self-described "thorn" in the EU's side.

US President Donald Trump has thrown his weight behind the EU's current longest-serving leader, who maintains close ties to Russia. The vote is being closely followed abroad, particularly across the rest of Europe.

Turnout hit a record 54 percent by noon, according to the election authorities, more than 14 percentage points higher than at the same stage in the 2022 vote, while AFP journalists saw people queuing to vote at numerous polling stations.

Opinion polls suggest the Tisza party of pro-European conservative Peter Magyar, who has promised a "system change", is running well ahead of Orban's, and analysts believe the high turnout could benefit the former government insider.

Cash-strapped Pak to get \$5 bn from Saudi, Qatar

ISLAMABAD, PTI

Cash-strapped Pakistan is set to receive USD 5 billion in financial support from Saudi Arabia and Qatar, providing a critical buffer for its fragile external position, according to a media report on Sunday.

The expected inflows come at a crucial juncture as Islamabad prepares to repay USD 3.5 billion to the United Arab Emirates (UAE) this month and faces pressure on its foreign exchange reserves, the Dawn newspaper said.

To avert pressure on Pakistan's weak foreign reserves, Saudi Arabia and Qatar will provide USD 5 billion in financial assistance, the report said, quoting sources in the finance ministry.

The development coincides with Finance Minister Muhammad Aurangzeb's visit to Washington to attend the IMF-World Bank Spring Meetings and advance Pakistan's economic diplomacy. Aurangzeb

will participate in the meetings scheduled from April 13 to 18, where he is expected to hold engagements with senior officials of the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank.

Policymakers view these interactions as part of a broader strategic outreach, with indications that traditional factors such as strict programme conditionalities or reliance on third-party guarantors, including the UAE, may carry less weight in the current context.

The IMF has stipulated that Pakistan's three key bilateral creditors - Saudi Arabia, China and the UAE - must maintain their cash deposits with the country until the completion of the ongoing three-year programme. It seems the UAE will be replaced by Qatar, the Dawn report said.

Ahead of his departure, Aurangzeb met Saudi finance minister Mohammed bin Abdullah Al-Jadaan in Islamabad, who also called on Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif.

Over 500 people arrested at Palestine Action protest in UK

LONDON, AFP

Police in London said they had arrested more than 500 pro-Palestinian protesters at a demonstration in support of the banned group Palestine Action on Saturday. Officers carried away activists to cheers and clapping from other demonstrators who gathered for the sit-down demonstration in the capital's Trafalgar Square.

The protesters held placards in support of the banned group Palestine Action, making them liable for arrest.

London's Metropolitan Police said on social media platform X just before midnight that they had arrested 523 people aged between 18 and 87.

Palestine Action was proscribed as a terrorist organisation in July, making it a criminal offence to belong to or support the group, punishable by up to 14 years in prison.

The High Court in London upheld a challenge to the ban

BAN SPARKS STIR

- Palestine Action was proscribed as a terrorist organisation in July, making it a criminal offence to belong to or support the group, punishable by up to 14 years in prison
- The High Court in London upheld a challenge to the ban in mid-February, saying it had interfered with the right to freedom of speech

in mid-February, saying it had interfered with the right to freedom of speech.

The government has been granted leave to appeal against the decision.

London's Metropolitan Police paused arrests in the wake of the High Court ruling before announcing in late March that they would resume.

"It's really important to con-

tinue to show up," said Freya, 28, manager of a London environmental organisation, one of those sitting towards the front of the crowd of protesters.

"It's important that we all continue to oppose genocide... The government might flip-flop in their legal argument but the morals of these people (here) do not change," she said.

There have been nearly 3,000 arrests since the ban on Palestine Action was imposed, mainly for carrying placards defending it. Hundreds of people are facing charges.

Protester Denis MacDermot, 73, from Edinburgh, said he had been arrested before and had no hesitation about turning out again.

"I'm a supporter of these great people," he said, waving towards other protesters, adding that if the court process was definitive "there would be no need for all this".

Amnesty UK condemned the arrests as "yet another blow to civil liberties in this country".

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Challengers revel in a run-fest

Salt, Kohli, Patidar slam fifties in 18-run defeat of Mumbai

G KRISHNAN
MUMBAI

As expected from the Wankhede surface, there were runs aplenty, and defending champions Royal Challengers Bengaluru didn't lose any opportunity to score as many. RCB posted a challenging 240/4, 10 short of their highest this season and their fourth straight 200-plus total, courtesy a rare occurrence of RCB's top-three scoring contrasting fifties. On a surface that demoralises bowlers, RCB still managed to mount pressure on the home team, inflicting an 18-run defeat on the five-time champions. MI were restricted to 222/5. It was RCB's third win in four fixtures and MI's

third consecutive loss. Even though MI began briskly with left-handed Ryan Rickelton leading the way and the veteran Rohit Sharma chipping in, two crucial wickets and Rohit retiring hurt applied brakes on the hosts. Even as MI heavily relied on their proven big-hitters, skipper Hardik Pandya and T20 World Cup-winning captain Suryakumar Yadav, the mounting asking run rate was beyond even them. MI lost Rohit to hamstringing when he was on 19 in the sixth over. Finishing the Powerplay at an acceptable 62/0, nine less than RCB's at the same stage, leg-spinner Suyash Sharma's twin strikes in his first over, the eighth of the innings, put MI on the back seat. With Suyash's first deliv-



Royal Challengers Bengaluru's Phil Salt scored a 36-ball 78 against Mumbai Indians at the Wankhede Stadium on Sunday. PTI

SCOREBOARD	
ROYAL CHALLENGERS BENGALURU: Phil Salt c Pandya b Thakur 78 (36b, 6x4, 6x6), Virat Kohli c Suryakumar b Pandya 50 (38b, 5x4, 1x6), Rajat Patidar c Varma b Santner 53 (20b, 4x4, 5x6), Tim David (not out) 34 (16b, 2x4, 3x6), Jitesh Sharma lbw 16b 10 (9b, 1x4), Romario Shepherd (not out) 2 (2b). Extras (LB-1, W-11, NB-1) 13. TOTAL (for 4 wkts, 20 overs) 240.	
Fall of wickets: 1-120 (Salt), 2-185 (Kohli), 3-194 (Patidar), 4-231 (Jitesh).	
Bowling: Trent Boult 4-0-50-1 (w-2), Hardik Pandya 4-0-39-1 (nb-1, w-1), Jasprit Bumrah 4-0-35-0 (w-1), Mitchell Santner 4-0-43-1 (w-1), Mayank Markande 2-0-40-0, Shubai Thakur 2-0-32-1 (w-6).	
MUMBAI INDIANS: Ryan Rickelton c Bhuvneshwar b Suyash 37 (22b, 3x4, 3x6), Rohit Sharma (ret'd hurt)	

ery, a wrong one, a well-set Rickelton top-edged to short third man. Off his fifth, Tilak Varma found short fine-leg Jacob Duffy in the way of a slog sweep. It was a phase in the middle overs when Suyash and left-arm spinner Krunal Pandya held Suryakumar and Hardik on a tight leash. Krunal mixed his faster ones, even sending down well-directed bouncers and his round-arm deliveries as he went for only 26 runs besides dismissing Suryakumar, caught at long-leg for 33 that was without a six.

Hardik too perished, playing what looked like a disinterested shot. With the asking rate climbing, Hardik had to go for big shots and ended up top-edging to deep backward point. The writing was on the wall as MI ran out of batters who could hit big. Krunal and Suyash combined to give 73 runs in eight overs, way less than the MI spinners Mitchell Santner and Mayank Markande - 83/1 in six overs. The way RCB, put into bat, began and played out their first 10 overs, it seemed anything above 250 was on the cards.

Phil Salt (78) exploded from the first over to post his first fifty in four innings this year. Virat Kohli (50) tried to bat deep and was happy to play second fiddle to Salt and later to his captain Rajat Patidar (53). Patidar, at one stage, threatened to score the joint fastest fifty in this league. Coming at No. 3 in place of the regular one-down Devdutt Padikkal, Patidar was one strike away from joining Yashasvi Jaiswal for the fastest IPL fifty ever, off 13 deliveries. But, Boult denied him by bowling at Patidar's toes.

While the first wicket partnership was going strong, Salt and Kohli posting 120, the second wicket between Kohli and Salt yielded 65 off just 23 balls. Two 20-run overs off leg-spinner Markande with Salt smashing him for three successive sixes in the first over and Patidar hitting him for three consecutive fours followed by a six, showed it was not a day for the bowlers. Adding to that, the conditions were not suitable as often players took treatment for cramps, leading to the match ending 10 minutes before midnight.

Titans too good for erring LSG

Prasidh, Buttler, Gill guide Gujarat to 7-wkt win

LUCKNOW, PTI

Skipper Shubman Gill and Jos Buttler backed up Prasidh Krishna's excellent four-wicket burst with flamboyant half-centuries, guiding Gujarat Titans to a comfortable seven-wicket win over Lucknow Super Giants in an Indian Premier League match here on Sunday. Prasidh shone bright with figures of 4 for 24 as GT restricted LSG to 164 for eight and then the visitors rode on Gill (56) and Buttler (60) to chase down the target with eight balls to spare. The Titans made 165 for three. GT started brightly with Gill and Sai Sudharsan stitching 45 runs off 31 balls before the latter was dismissed by Digvesh Rathi, caught by Avesh Khan at fine leg. Buttler grabbed with both hands the life offered to him by LSG skipper Rishabh Pant. The Englishman was dropped



GT's Prasidh Krishna picked up a four-wicket haul against LSG on Sunday. PTI

SCOREBOARD	
LUCKNOW SUPER GIANTS: Aiden Markram c Sundar b Prasidh 30, Mitchell Marsh c Gill b Rabada 11, Rishabh Pant c Tewatia b Siraj 18, Ayush Badoni c Phillips b Prasidh 9, Nicholas Pooran c Gill b Prasidh 19, Abdul Samad c Phillips b Ashok 18, Mukul c Buttler b Prasidh 18, George Lindse c sub Shahrulk b Ashok 16, Mohammed Shami (not out) 12, Avesh Khan not out 4. Extras (B-1, LB-5, W-3) 9. TOTAL (for 8 wkts, 20 overs) 164.	
Fall of wickets: 1-45, 2-45, 3-69, 4-74, 5-109, 6-118, 7-131, 8-157.	
Bowling: Mohammed Siraj 4-0-19-1, Kagiso Rabada 4-0-54-1, Ashok	

Sharma 4-0-32-2, Prasidh Krishna 4-0-28-4, Rashid Khan 4-0-25-0. **GUJARAT TITANS:** Sai Sudharsan c Avesh b Rathi 15, Shubman Gill c Pant b Prince 56, Jos Buttler c Markram b Shami 60, Washington Sundar (not out) 21, Rahul Tewatia (not out) 10. Extras (W-3). **TOTAL (for 3 wkts, 18.4 overs) 165.** **Fall of wickets:** 1-45, 2-129, 3-135. **Bowling:** Mohammed Shami 4-0-36-1, Prince Yadav 4-0-31-1, Digvesh Rathi 4-0-31-1, George Lindse 3-0-28-0, Avesh Khan 2-0-24-0, Aiden Markram 1-4-0-15-0. **Result:** GT won by 7 wickets. **PoM:** Prasidh Krishna.

IN BRIEF

K'taka girls in semifinals

► Richa Bhatia scored an early brace as Karnataka girls football team defeated Assam 3-1 in their last group match to seal their semifinal spot in the U-13 Asmita National Football League in Mahilpur, Punjab on Sunday, reports DHNS. Karnataka will face Mizoram in the last four on Tuesday (April 14). **Results:** Karnataka: 3 (Richa Bhatia 1st, 13th, Subhathra A 19th) bt Assam: 0.

State cyclists finish third

► Karnataka cyclists grabbed seven medals - including two gold and as many silver - to finish third at the Asmita Khelo India Women's League South Zone Track Cycling Championship on Sunday, reports PTI from Thiruvananthapuram. Hosts Kerala clinched 11 gold, 14 silver and 10 bronze medals to secure the top honour at the two-day event held from Saturday at Karyavattom.

Arjun, Aditya win gold

► Arjun Singh and Aditya Singh won India's first gold medal by defeating top seeds Ryder Brown and Soli Messiri at the US Open Pickleball Championship in Naples, Florida on Sunday, reports PTI from Mumbai.

◆ ON TV ◆
CRICKET
IPL: Sunrisers Hyderabad vs Rajasthan Royals (7:30). LIVE on Star Sports Network, JioHotstar.
FOOTBALL
EPL: Man United vs Leeds (12:30 am, Tuesday). LIVE on Star Sports Network, JioHotstar.
La Liga: Levante vs Getafe (12:30 am, Tuesday). LIVE on FanCode.
TENNIS
ATP 500 Barcelona Open: Round 1 (5:30 pm). LIVE on FanCode.

Rampant RR look to heap more misery on SRH

HYDERABAD, PTI

Rampant Rajasthan Royals will look to tighten their grip on the top spot when they face an inconsistent Sunrisers Hyderabad in an Indian Premier League clash here on Monday. The Royals have been the standout side this season, ticking almost every box with authority. Four commanding wins in as many games have underlined their dominance, powered by a destructive top order and a vastly improved bowling attack. At the heart of their success is the explosive opening pair of Yashasvi Jaiswal and teen sensation Vaibhav Sooryavanshi, who have consistently dismantled opposition attacks in the Powerplay. Jaiswal's elegance combined with Sooryavanshi's fearless strokeplay have made them one of the most feared duos this season. At number three, Dhruv Jurel has added stability, stitching partnerships and ensuring the early momentum



Rajasthan Royals batting sensation Vaibhav Sooryavanshi has scored 200 runs at a strike rate of 266.66 in four games this season.

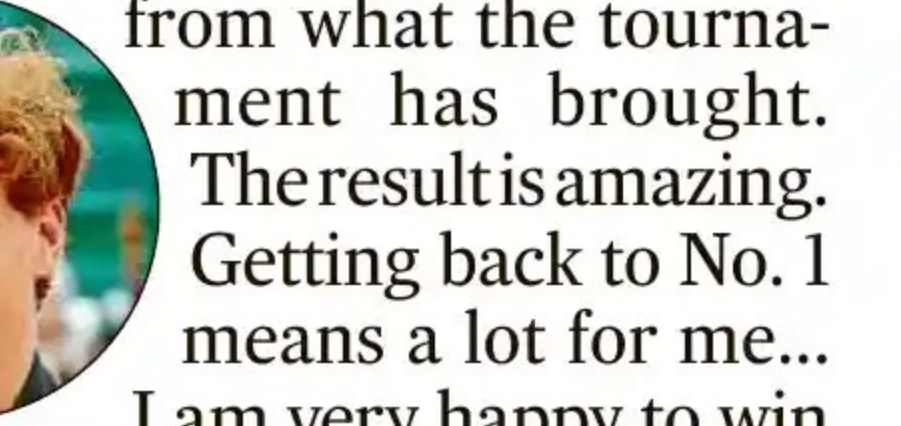
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is not lost. The middle order, led by skipper Riyan Parag, remains largely untested, though it has not maximised the limited chances it has got so far, perhaps the only minor concern in an otherwise dominant campaign. But what has truly marked RR's transformation is their bowling. After finishing ninth last season due to a lack of penetration, they have returned as a far more disciplined and threatening unit.

POINTS TABLE							
Team	Played	Won	Lost	NR	Pts	NRR	
Rajasthan Royals	4	4	0	0	8	2.055	
Punjab Kings	4	3	0	1	7	0.720	
Royal Challengers	4	3	1	0	6	1.148	
Delhi Capitals	4	2	2	0	4	0.322	
Gujarat Titans	4	2	2	0	4	-0.029	
Lucknow Super Giants	4	2	2	0	4	-0.427	
Sunrisers Hyderabad	4	1	3	0	2	-0.024	
Mumbai Indians	4	1	3	0	2	-0.772	
Chennai Super Kings	4	1	3	0	2	-1.532	
Kolkata Knight Riders	4	0	3	1	1	-1.315	

Flawless Sinner slays Alcaraz to return as No. 1

MONTE CARLO, AFP: Jannik Sinner (in pic) beat Carlos Alcaraz in straight sets to win the Monte Carlo Masters for the first time on Sunday and reclaim the world number one ranking from his Spanish rival. Sinner downed Alcaraz 7-6 (7/5), 6-3 to capture his third ATP 1000 title of the year after completing the "Sunshine Double" last month with victories in Indian Wells and Miami. The 24-year-old Sinner joins Novak Djokovic and Rafael Nadal as only the third player to win four successive ATP 1000 titles. He also triumphed in Paris at the end of last season. "We came here trying to get as many matches as pos-



Aman, Mukul claim Asian silver

BISHKEK, PTI: Olympic medalist Aman Sehrawat settled for a silver while Mukul Dahiya also lost his final on Sunday as India signed off from the Asian Wrestling Championships with 17 medals, including two gold. India finished with a tally of two gold, six silver and nine bronze. In the non-Olympic 61kg freestyle final, Aman went down to Kwang Myong Kim of North Korea in a high scoring final that ended 13-10 in the Koreans favour. Later, Mukul Dahiya went down 0-7 against Iran's Kamran G Ghasemipour in the men's 86kg freestyle final to take India's silver medal tally to six. Dinesh then signed off India campaign with a bronze.

City rout Chelsea to close gap on leaders Arsenal

LONDON, AFP: Manchester City ignited the Premier League title race with a second-half blitz that sealed a 3-0 win against Chelsea as they closed the gap on leaders Arsenal on Sunday. Pep Guardiola's side produced a devastating spell immediately after half-time, with Nico O'Reilly and Marc Guehi scoring in the space of six minutes at Stamford Bridge. Jeremy Doku wrapped up a statement victory to ensure City took advantage of Arsenal's shock 2-1 home defeat against Bournemouth on Saturday. Second-placed City are now only six points behind Arsenal with a game in hand, setting up a seismic showdown against the Gunners at the Etihad Stadium on April 19. Having beaten Arsenal in the League Cup final and thrashed Liverpool in the FA Cup quarterfinals, City are hitting form at just the right time. **Results:** Chelsea: 0 lt to Manchester City: 3 (O'Reilly 51st, Guehi 57th, Doku 68th); Crystal Palace: 2 (Mateta 80th, 90-4) bt Newcastle: 1 (Osula 43rd); Nottingham Forest: 1 (Williams 38th) drew with Aston Villa: 1 (Murrillo 23 og); Sunderland: 1 (Mukiele 61st) bt Tottenham: 0.

Young catches up with Rory

Rory McIlroy charged back late after squandering a six-stroke edge to share the lead with Cameron Young after a wild third round at the Masters on Saturday. A chaotic afternoon at Augusta National saw both men plunk key shots into water on the back nine but finish level atop the leaderboard on 11-under 205 through 54 holes, one stroke ahead of American Sam Burns. McIlroy, who started the day with a record six-shot lead, carded one-over-par 73 while Young roared into contention with a scintillating seven-under-par 65. "I didn't have it today," McIlroy admitted. "I scrambled a lot on the front nine." Second-ranked McIlroy birdied the 14th and 15th holes

PAPHOS (CYPRUS), PTI: Indian Grandmaster R Vaishali went down to China's Jiner Zhu on Sunday, throwing the Candidates tournament wide open with just two rounds remaining in the event that will select the challenger to women's world champion Wenjun Ju. As luck would have it, Vaishali lost with white pieces when a draw could have put her in the sole lead but her instinct to go for a win in every game got the better of her. Incidentally, this was the second loss in the tournament for the Indian girl and both these defeats came against Zhu. With seven points in her kitty from 12 games, Vaishali was joined by Zhu and Anna Muzychuk of Ukraine. Bibisara Assaubayeva of Kazakhstan put an end to the Russian dreams of fighting it out for the women's title with a finely crafted victory over Kateryna Lagno. The Kazakh girl is just a half point adrift of the three leaders and the final rest day should come in handy for her and Vaishali to stake their claim. In the other game of the



day, Divya Deshmukh lost to Zhongyi Tan of China and both are out of contention for even a podium finish. In the open section, Uzbek Javokhir Sindarov was yet again dominant with his white pieces and played out an easy draw with world number two Hikaru Nakamura of the United States. **Results (round 12): Open:** Andrey Espeneko (Rus, 4.5) drew with R Praggnanandhaa (Ind, 5); Matthias Bluebaum (Ger, 5) drew with Fabiano Caruana (US, 6); Hikaru Nakamura (US, 5) drew with Javokhir Sindarov (Uzb, 9); Wei Yi (Chn, 5) playing with Anish Giri (Ned, 6.5). **Women:** Aleksandra Goryachkina (Rus, 5) lt to Anna Muzychuk (Ukr, 7); R Vaishali (Ind, 7) lt to Jiner Zhu (Chn, 7); Bibisara Assaubayeva (Kaz, 6.5) bt Kateryna Lagno (Rus, 5.5); Zhongyi Tan (Chn, 5) bt Divya Deshmukh (Ind, 5).



USA's Cameron Young shot a seven-under 65 in the third round of the Masters on Saturday. AFP

to be. McIlroy, a five-time major winner, hopes to match Tiger Woods, Jack Nicklaus and Nick Faldo as the only back-to-back winners of the green jacket. Third-ranked Young, last month's Players Championship winner, got off to a scorching start with birdies on five of the first 10 holes. He birdied 13 and 14, his drive at the 13th hitting a tree and landing fortuitously in the fairway, then overcame a watery bogey at 15 by curling in a 27-foot birdie putt at the par-three 16th. As a result, the 28-year-old American has a prime chance for his first major title. **Leading scores (after 64 holes):** 205: Cameron Young (USA) 73-67-65; Rory McIlroy (NIR) 67-65-73; 206: Sam Burns (USA) 67-71-68; 207: Shane Lowry (Ire) 70-69-68; 208: Jason Day (Aus) 69-71-68, Justin Rose (Eng) 70-69-69.

Ashwa Frankie wins main event

DELHI RESULTS
5 Nawab-trained Ashwa Frankie, ridden by K Nazil, won the DRC President Cup (Div I), the feature event of the races on Sunday.
1. Taj Tarang Plate (Div I) 1000M: She's A Beauty (Shivam) 1; Divit (Jai Prakash) 2; Trending Cruise (Dhanu S Deora) 3; Biggy Tymer (Ankit Pal) 4; WB: 2, 1, 6 1/4L; T: 59.30s; TB: R Kumar; Fav: She's A Beauty.
2. Taj Tarang Plate (Div II) 1000M: Lemon Pie (Vishal) 1; Lady Hitman (Varun) 2; Chieftain (Shivam) 3; Tantalising Star (K Narendra) 4; WB: 11/4, 2 1/4, 1 3/4L; T: 59.72s; TB: R Kumar; Fav: Lady Hitman.
3. Udaan Shakti Plate 1200M: Nizbati Wings (Abdul Fazzal) 1; Mighty (Dhanu S Deora) 2; Pure Pride (R Rakesh) 3; Ustead (Praveen Saini) 4; WB: 6 1/2, 1 1/2, 1L; T: 1:12.74; TB: R Saini; Fav: Mighty.
4. DRC President Cup (Div I) 1200M: Ashwa Frankie (K Nazil) 1; Properly Posh (Arjun) 2; Jet Sukhrai (K Sunny Kumar) 3; Big Daddy (Vishal) 4; WB: 1/2, 4 3/4, 3/4L; T: 1:12.33; TB: S Nawab; Fav: Properly Posh.
5. DRC President Cup (Div II) 1200M: Ashwa Manslu (K Nazil) 1; Missey Boy (Sameer Qureshi) 2; Ashwa Sultan (GS Shekhawat) 3; Beejay (Abdul Fazzal) 4; WB: 1 1/4, 4 1/4, 1 1/2L; T: 1:12.60; TB: Mohsin Khan; Fav: Ashwa Manslu.
6. Vijay Dhwaj Plate 1100M: Best In Business (Abdul Fazzal) 1; Ashwa Denali (K Nazil) 2; Thanks Again (Shivam) 3; Jet Falcon (Deepak Kumar) 4; WB: 1 1/4, 1 1/4, 2L; T: 1:06.24; TB: Zulfiqar Khan; Fav: Thanks Again.
Bengaluru dividends
I race: Rs 16w; Rs 10, 14, 12p; Shp: Rs 40; Thp: Rs 50; Fc: Rs 91; Q: Rs 64; Tri: Rs 100 & 31; Exp: Rs 553 & 725. II race: Rs 23w; Rs 13, 15p; Shp: Rs 24; Tri: Rs 27; Fc: Rs 49; Q: Rs 26; Tri: Rs 171 & 75; Exp: Rs 535 & 509. III race: Rs 27w; Rs 11, 16p; Shp: Rs 28; Thp: Rs 39; Fc: Rs 57; Q: Rs 30; Tri: Rs 141 & 99; Exp: Rs 590 & 218. IV race: Rs 55w; Rs 26, 12p; Shp: Rs 26; Thp: Rs 74; Fc: Rs 159; Q: Rs 44; Tri: Rs 2175 & 2051; Exp: Rs 2337 & 1078. V race: Rs 12w; Rs 10, 18p; Shp: Rs 27; Thp: Rs 31; Fc: Rs 36; Q: Rs 25; Tri: Rs 148 & 99; Exp: Rs 377 & 237. VI race: Rs 125w; Rs 19, 25, 12p; Shp: Rs 65; Thp: Rs 41; Fc: Rs 820; Q: Rs 498; Tri: Rs 5145 & 1023; Exp: Rs 11,874 & 15,267. Jackpot: Rs 59,371 & Rs 683. Treble: Rs 2789.

Aarit youngest Indian IM norm holder

NEW DELHI, PTI: Delhi-based 10-year-old Aarit Kapil became the youngest Indian chess player to make an International Master norm after he drew with Samuel Asaka of Australia in the final round of an international tournament at Menorca in Spain. Aarit has shown that he could be the next big thing in Indian chess with his performance in Spain.



Sawan Barwal. DH FILE PHOTO

Barwal breaks 48-year-old marathon national record

ROTTERDAM, PTI: Himachal Pradesh long-distance runner Sawan Barwal on Sunday scripted history as he broke the 48-year-old marathon national record, the longest standing mark in Indian athletics, at the NN Marathon Rotterdam.

Barwal clocked 2 hours 11 minutes and 58 seconds to finish 20th in the elite marathon race and erase the previous national record of 2:12:00 which stood since 1978 in Shivrath Singh's name.

The other Indian in the fray, Gopi Thonakal finished 23rd as he ran the 42.195km distance with a time of 2:13:16.

Barwal's achievement was all the more praiseworthy as the Rotterdam event was his first marathon race. He had not run any official marathon race before Sunday.

This was his second competition of the season.

Sanika, Mandara power Mysore District

BENGALURU, DHNS: Sanika and Mandara scored 18 points each as Mysore District A downed Vivek's SC 86-48 in the second State Women's Basketball League Championship at the Sree Kanteerava Stadium on Sunday.

Results: Mysore District A: 86 (Sanika 18, Mandara 18) bt Vivek's SC: 48 (Manasvi 26, Ananya 11); JSC: 50 (Sanjana 23, Sharleen 11) bt Appaiah BC: 24 (Hiranmayi 13); Mounts Club: 61 (Nilaaya 23, Pallavi 15) bt Bangalore Vanguards: 37 (Siri 12); Mounts Club: 46 (Nilaaya 26, Pallavi 14) bt Vimanapura SC: 42 (Shwetha 18, Shreya 11); Young Orion's: 57 (Abha 24, Sarayu 17) bt JSC: 55 (Aadhya 21, Sanjana 10); Mysore District A: 65 (Sanika 26, Kusuma 19) bt DYES Vidyanagar: 54 (Sheetal 17, Vibha 12).

BADMINTON ASIA CHAMPIONSHIPS

Dream run ends in heartbreak

Ayush grabs silver after losing to Shi in the final

NINGBO (CHINA), PTI

India's Ayush Shetty signed off with a silver medal after his giant-killing run ended in a straight-game loss to world No. 2 Shi Yu Qi in the final of the Badminton Asia Championships here on Sunday.

The 20-year-old from Mangaluru struggled to find his rhythm, going down 8-21, 10-21 to the reigning world champion from China, as India's 61-year wait for a men's singles gold at the event continued.

Despite the loss, it was a creditable campaign from the unseeded youngster, who became only the second Indian men's singles player after Dinesh Khanna to reach the final of the continental showpiece.

Khanna remains the only Indian singles champion at the event, having won the title in 1965. Since then, only the men's doubles pair of Satwiksairaj Rankireddy and Chirag Shetty have lifted the trophy, winning it in 2023.

World No. 25 Ayush entered the contest on the back of defeats to Shi at the Malaysia Super 1000 earlier this year and the Indonesia Masters last season. However, he had played with far greater control and attacking clarity this week, topping world No. 1 Kunlavut Vitidsarn, world No. 4 Jonatan Christie and world No. 7 Li Shi Feng en route to the final.

However, the Indian, a product of the Padukone-Draavid Centre for Sports Excellence in Bengaluru, failed to counter the tactical discipline of Shi, who used his repertoire of strokes and deception to deny Ayush the opportunity to play his natural attacking game.

Shi dictated the geometry of the court from the outset, controlling the net exchanges and forcing Ayush into the forecourt battle early. The variation in the Chinese player's game blunted the Indian's attack, as his smashes lacked precision and he succumbed to scoreboard pressure, leading to rushed shot-making.



India's Ayush Shetty returns during his loss to China's Shi Yu Qi in the final of the Badminton Asia Championships in Ningbo, China, on Sunday. AFP

“I had a tough draw from the beginning. So I'm really happy with the way I played throughout this tournament.”
AYUSH SHETTY

Shi logged the opening points with two fine net dribbles to race to a 4-0 lead, as Ayush's smashes lacked precision early on and he trailed 2-6. A long rally ended with the Chinese player going wide, offering the Indian some respite.

A deceptive net shot helped Shi move to 7-4, and he extended the lead to 11-6 as Ayush struggled for control, committing a string of unforced errors.

Shi mixed it up effectively, producing a lovely drop shot and repeatedly drawing the

Indian to the forecourt with cross returns like a metronome, forcing errors. Two down-the-line smashes gave Shi a massive cushion of game points, and he sealed the opening game when Ayush sprayed a return wide.

The Indian needed a complete reset to stay alive, and he responded with a thunderous straight smash. However, he couldn't hold on to the momentum as the Chinese clawed back to 7-7 after two long shots and a smash into the net from Ayush.

Ayush belongs at this level, attest coaches

HITA PRAKASH
BENGALURU, DHNS

In recent years, the buzz mostly circulated around more well-known seniors such as Lakshya Sen, PV Sindhu, HS Prannoy and others. Even then, Ayush Shetty's name would always find a passing mention with the suffix 'future potential' among those in the badminton community. Fellow shuttlers kept a close watch, coaches observed and the rest eagerly waited for his burst onto the big scene.

That moment arrived this past week when the 20-year-old Mangaluru lad repaid the faith of his close ones by defeating one big name after another to reach the final of the Badminton Asia Championships in Ningbo, China.

Though Ayush went down 8-21, 10-21 to world No. 2 Shi Yu Qi in the summit clash, the world No. 25 defeating China's Li Shi Feng (world No. 7), Chinese Taipei's Chi Yu Jen (WR 20), Indonesia's Jonatan



Silver medallist Ayush Shetty (left) and champion Shi Yu Qi pose with their spoils at the Badminton Asia Championships in Ningbo, China, on Sunday. AFP

Christie (WR 4) and Kunlavut Vitidsarn (WR 1 & defending champ) from the opening round to the semifinal, respectively, earned him respect and put the youngster on par with the best.

"Ayush has outdone himself in this entire tournament," Sagar Chopra, Ayush's coach at the Centre for Sports Excellence

(CoSC) in Bengaluru, told *DH* after the title clash on Sunday.

"He has nothing to feel bad about as he lost to a better player today. This is an absolute confidence booster for Ayush especially knowing it's a big result after a back injury. More than us technical coaches, huge credit goes to the trainers and physios who worked

relentlessly to make him injury-free," said Sagar.

Among those who always believed in the towering right-hander was Vimal Kumar, head of Badminton Excellence at CoSE and former national coach. And the 63-year-old Olympian echoed that this was a significant week in Ayush's budding career.

"Matches like these (final) are invaluable. They expose exactly what is required to compete consistently with the very best in the world. The gaps are clear: better shot variation, improved rally construction, tighter control under pressure and smarter point building.

"Shi looked extremely well-prepared from the outset. He controlled the tempo brilliantly, denying Ayush the rhythm he usually thrives on. The encouraging part is that Ayush has already shown he belongs at this level. With the right adjustments and continued exposure to such matches, he will only grow stronger," pointed Vimal.

AFI to begin 'SRY Gene Testing' for female athletes from May

ADITYA K HALDER
BENGALURU, DHNS

The Athletics Federation of India have implemented mandatory 'SRY Gene Testing' for all female athletes, starting with the National Senior Athletics Federation Competitions in Ranchi in May.

The four-day competition also serves as the final qualification trials for this year's Commonwealth Games and Asia U-23 Athletics Championships. The tests will also be conducted at the National Inter-State Senior Athletics Championships in Bhubaneswar in June (final qualification trials for Asian Games), followed by the Youth and Open Nationals in Ludhiana and New Delhi, respectively.

The screening will be conducted through a cheek swab or blood sample for verification of the biological sex of the female athletes with a view to protecting fairness in competition.

The federation took the step in accordance with the World Athletics rules, which is a mandatory one-time SRY gene test for all female athletes, and came into effect in September last year. The International Olympic Committee also brought in a similar policy last month under 'Protection of Female (Women's) Category in Olympic Sport' and applies to the 2028 LA Olympics.

The SRY (Sex-determining Region Y) Gene Test detects the presence of Y or male chromosomes in female athletes, leading to Differences in Sex Development (DSD) in an individual during puberty.

As per IOC's policy, if an athlete tests positive, re-tests will be done to ascertain the outcome. A double positive will be followed by further testing to determine if an individual with certain types of DSD has an advantage or not while competing.

Karnataka's Krishik, Ramya finish first in Athletics Series 4

BENGALURU, DHNS: Karnataka's 110m hurdler Krishik M clocked a new personal best of 13.72 seconds to dominate the men's event during the Indian Athletics Series 4 in Ranchi on Sunday.

Karnataka's javelin thrower Ramyasree Jain, meanwhile, grabbed the top spot by default as the lone participant in the women's final with a modest effort of 49.80 metres.

Representing Reliance Sports, the 22-year-old hurdler clocked the fourth-fastest timing to finish by an Indian to finish at the top while big names such as national record holder Tejas Shirse, Siddhanth Thingalaya were missing from the one-day meet. Krishik surpassed his previous best of 13.82, which he did at the IAS in Bengaluru on April 4.

Meanwhile in the U-20 events, Karnataka's mid-distance runner Vaishnavi Rawal won a two-athlete women's 800m final with a timing of 2:10.25.

The tournament was largely devoid of big names with the Indian Athletics Series 3 a day before in New Delhi attracting bigger names.

Results: Winners and Karnataka only: Men: 100m: Aniket Nalawade (Mah) 10.60s. **110m hurdles:** Krishik M (Rel) 13.72. **200m:** Mahendra Santa (Odi) 21.96. **400m:** Malaya Barik (Odi) 49.33. **400m hurdles:** Shakti Singh (Raj) 51.34. **800m:** Mahasin Awal (WB) 1:53.21. **1500m:** Ashok Dandasena (Odi) 4:02.98. **5000m:** Sandeep Pal (UP), 14:11.62. **Long jump:** Sarun Payasingh (Odi) 7.48m. **Triple jump:** Yuva Raj (TN) 15.09. **High jump:** Sarvesh Kushare (Mah) 2.19. **Javelin throw:** Uttam Patil (Mah) 74.85. **Shot put:** Raj Roshan (Jha) 14.20. **U-20: 100m:** Pratik Maharan (Odi) 10.96s. **800m:** Md Sarwar (Jha) 1:58.69. **Long jump:** RC Jithin Arjunana (JWV) 7.35m. **Triple jump:** Nupur Pandey (WB) 12.64. **Javelin throw:** Ashutosh Singh (Odi) 58.48. **Discuss throw:** Nirmal Jena (Odi) 48.77.

Women: 100m: Mousumi Roy (Odi) 11.83s. **110m hurdles:** Pragyan Prasanti Shau (Odi) 13.62. **200m:** Mousumi Roy (Odi) 24.79. **400m:** Sukhi Basky (Odi) 54.91. **400m hurdles:** R Vithya Ramraj (Raj) 57.02. **800m:** Diptirani Sahoo (Odi) 2:13.85. **1500m:** Namita Pradhan (Odi) 5:01.87. **Long jump:** Ancy Sojan (Nav) 6.45m. **High jump:** Mahak Nasrin Dayan (Odi) 1.60. **U-20: 100m:** Anushka Kar (WB) 12.19s. **100m hurdles:** Tiasha Chakraborty (WB) 14.80. **800m:** Vaishnavi Rawal (Kar) 2:10.25. **Javelin throw:** Sabita Murmu (Jha) 45.30m.

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